

**PROTESTANTS
UNDER
POLISH RULE**

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PROTESTANTS UNDER POLISH RULE

by

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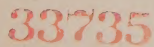
Evangelical Press Association for Germany

Berlin-Steglitz

1926.

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The United Protestant Church in Posen and West-Prussia under Polish Rule.

1. *The Catholic Character of the Polish State.*

In order to understand the position of the United Protestant Church in Poland, it must be borne in mind that the Polish State is essentially a *Roman Catholic* one. A glance at history will make this clear. It has been said, and rightly, that it was due to the Catholic Church and the Catholic priests that Poland was again restored as a nation.

When Poland was partitioned between Prussia, Russia and Austria from 1772 to 1793, neither Protestant Prussia nor orthodox Russia were Catholic countries. The national differences were thus aggravated by religious differences. The Catholic Church placed its entire power, comprised in the pulpit, the confessional and spiritual solicitude, at the service of the Polish people. This went so far that in the minds of the Polish inhabitants the concepts Catholic and Polish became identical. The struggle for cultural and national independence thus took on a religious sanctity, and it is hence perfectly natural that Poland, re-arisen, should remember the importance of the services rendered to her cause by the Catholic Church and by every individual priest.

The position of the Catholic Church in the new Poland was clearly defined from the beginning, in spite of the fact that until the autumn of 1922, Poland's President was Marshal Pilsudski, a man who had gone over to the Reformed Church. This man, in spite of being himself a non-Catholic, was clever enough to consider the universal sentiment of the populace and not to parade his anti-clerical opinions openly. On the other hand, the Catholic Church had no lack of political personalities, who were capable of supporting and putting through its demands. It was thus able to put forward these demands at

once. The main object was nothing less than to establish the Catholic character of the Polish State in the Constitution itself. The attempt to carry through an article of the Constitution, aimed directly against Pilsudski, that the President of the State must always be a Catholic, failed. But Article 114, treating of the position of the Catholic Church in the state, was carried and became part of the Constitution. It reads as follows:

"The Roman Catholic confession, being the religion of the overwhelming majority of the people, assumes a dominant position among the religions enjoying equal rights in the State."

It is obvious that this Article is a compromise. As a matter of fact, it is a contradiction in terms to state that all religions are recognized as having equal rights and yet that one of them should be assigned a dominant position: either their rights are really equal, in which case it is impossible for any of them to enjoy any special privileges—or one does enjoy the dominant position, in which case one should not speak of equal rights. The principle of the first place in the Polish State being accorded to the Catholic religion, is the only part of this article which has any practical significance. The very same State which up to the present has declined every demand of the United Protestant Church with the allegation that the relations between Church and State were not yet regulated, has from its first day in power, allowed the Catholic Church to exercise the greatest influence even in purely state matters, although its position with regard to the State was not fixed for a long time.

It has now been regulated in the Concordat signed between the Vatican and the Polish state in the Spring of 1925. There is no need to enter here into a discussion of the contents of the Concordat, since no experience has been had as to its practical results. One might, however, say that every consideration is paid to the wishes of the Church, and to the position of leadership accorded to it in the Constitution.

What are the practical results of this ascendancy of the Catholic Church?

¹ In reality *forty-five per cent* of the population of Poland is non-Polish, and for the most part, non-Catholic.



D Paul Blau, Superintendent-General in Posen.

In the first place, there is the extensive State financial support which the Catholic Church enjoys. The State pays a great part of the salaries of the clergy. The priests' correspondence is post free, monks and nuns may even travel half-price on the railway.

In this connection, it is important to mention the decorative part played by the Catholic church in Polish public life. In the smallest and remotest village, precisely as in the capital city of Warsaw, no national or popular festival is thinkable in which the Church does not play a suitably prominent part. Even during the time of Pilsudski's presidency, the Archbishop Kakovski was the first to present his congratulations at the official New Year's Reception. When the remains of the Polish author Henryk Sienkiewicz were transferred from Vevey in Switzerland to Warsaw in October 1924, in order that they might be buried in the Ian Cathedral, all the ceremonies in honour of the national author, amid the participation of the entire people, bore the stamp of the church.

It is a curious fact that the close connection with the Catholic church is particularly noticeable in the Polish army. Every parade is given a churchly sanction, every new armoured train receives a blessing. When the rifle factory in Wola produced its first machine-gun, Archbishop Kakovski consecrated it with his own hand. As a sign of gratitude, the Archbishop is accompanied on his travels through his diocese by a military guard of honour. It was self-understood that not only the garrison churches, which formerly had an undenominational character, but also those which had been purely Protestant, should be delivered over to the Catholic Church. It dawned only gradually upon the Polish Ministry of War that there were a great many non-Catholic soldiers in the Polish army. A President of the Polish State, Wojciechowski, refuses to enter a Protestant Church on principle.

Much agitation was caused by an utterance of Count Bninski, the Voivode of Posen, at the Catholic Assembly in Lissa in 1923: "*There are only as many good Poles in Poland as there are good Catholics.*"

The Catholic priests play a great part, not only in the parties of the Seim, but also in the administration, where priests have been installed as officials in a number of departments. In the district of Briesen (Western Prussia), out of twenty-four local administrators, there were thirteen priests. The registry offices, contrary to the clear wording of the German laws which were still in force, as to the attesting of the personalia, were also frequently put into the hands of the clergy. The Bishops later protested against the employment of clergy in subordinate offices, but they have remained in higher and more influential positions. In particular the administration of education is for example entirely in their hands.

It must in the end prove fatal for the Polish state that the "leading position" of the Catholic Church should result in the State not being able to summon up sufficient courage to oppose energetically the open aggressions of the Church.

This is particularly clearly shown in the question of mixed marriages. It is well-known that ever since a papal decision was issued on December 9, 1917, the position of the Catholic Church in regard to this question has again become extraordinarily aggressive. A marriage between persons of different confessions is only regarded as legal when it is performed by a Catholic priest. This clerical principle has no practical results where a strong State authority has the power to protect the state marriage laws. In those parts of Poland which were formerly Prussian, the question is therefore of no immediate importance. It is quite another matter in that part of former Russian Poland where the clergy fill the office of registrars and marriage jurisdiction lies in the hands of clerical courts.

The real position in this region, and the weakness of the Polish government in a question so deeply concerning its authority, is clearly shown in the words written by a jurist in the Warsaw weekly *Głos Prawdy* in June 1924:

"It is known that the Catholic clergy in our country form a state within the state, ruling according to its own laws. But it is perhaps not so generally known that in cases where the particular law comes into conflict with the Polish law, then the state law

must give way. An extreme instance of this is the question of divorce, which in Congress Poland is entirely in the hands of the clerical courts."

"The Ministry of Justice, naturally disturbed by the ever-increasing number of marriages which had illegally been declared invalid, deputed a higher official to effect an understanding with the curia. On being questioned as to the authority upon which the Consistorial Court based its decisions as to invalidity of marriages, the Professor in charge of the proceedings indicated the *Corpus Juris canonici*, a copy of which was lying on the table. The official remarked that the Marriage Law of 1836 was in force in Poland, and at once received the answer: "If the Ministry takes up this attitude, we have nothing more to discuss. You can send us to Siberia, as the Russians used to do." Thus the discussion ended. The Consistorial Court continued, in full knowledge of the facts, to do violence to the law.

Such encroachments are also prevalent where education is concerned. A particularly crass case, which at the same time, again shows clearly how the "dominant position" occupied by the Catholic Church in the Polish state naturally results to the disadvantage of those professing another faith, was related in the Socialist paper *Robotnik* of Warsaw in the issue dated October 1, 1924. The extract runs as follows:

"In Schildberg (Ostrzechow), the Director of the Teachers' College is the Protestant pastor Karl Banschel. He is a good Polish patriot. It should be noted that in these districts of Adelnau, Schildberg and Kempen, which lie on the borders of German Upper Silesia, a large part of the true Polish inhabitants belong to the Protestant faith. This population was strongly subject to German cultural and political influences, and in the last census declared itself in favour of *German* nationality. The influence of Pastor Banschel, who set an example to the local population of a man who, although Protestant, was at the same time a sincere Pole and a Polish patriot, was all the more important and valuable for Poland on this account. Pastor Banschel enjoys universal esteem, and this assists him in his task of winning the germanized Protestants to the Polish cause.

One would be inclined to believe that from the national and racial point of view this would be a thoroughly estimable course of action. But why does a dull, thoughtless, fanaticized clergy exist at all, if not to ruin the useful work done for state and people whenever it fails to fit exactly with narrow clerical-religious ideas?

The Schildberg Seminary numbers at present 228 pupils, of whom 117 are Catholics and 111 Protestants. It was not agreeable to the Catholic clergy that a Protestant pastor should be the principal of a school in which the Catholic pupils were in the majority. There are no church schools in Poland, no regulation which demands that the Director should be of the same religion as the majority of the pupils. The clerical party endeavoured to secure the insertion of such a clause in the Constitution, but it did not succeed. But what do the clergy care for the Constitution? A tremendous agitation against Pastor Banschel began, at its head was the Instructor of Religion in the Seminary, Pastor Marian Jezierski.

Pastor Banschel was engaged to a Catholic lady who later went over to the Protestant church. This occurrence furnished the excuse for a piece of mediaeval mummery. On June 22, Father Kovalski ascended the pulpit in Schildberg Church. Father Berlinski stood at the high altar. Pastor Banschel's fiancée was solemnly excommunicated from the pulpit for contemplating marriage with a Protestant. The ban was extended to include all persons who should continue to be on friendly terms with the culprit or should condone her "offence".

This event does not date from the Dark Ages, from the time of the Jesuit reaction in Poland, or from that period of dreadful darkness when Poland was sinking into the abyss. This happened in the democratic Polish Republic, in which freedom of conscience is guaranteed! Publicly, and with mighty churchly pomp, the ban of excommunication was pronounced against a Catholic lady, because she had left the Church.

After this ban, tremendous pressure began to be put upon Pastor Banschel to induce him to resign from the post of Seminary Director. The clergy found an obedient tool in the person of the Posen Vice-Curator Stein. Herr Bernhard Chrzanowski is Curator of Schools in the Posen Voivode district. But this man is much too honourable to enjoy the confidence of the local clergy. It is for this reason that Herr Stein, a person assumed to be absolutely "safe", was installed at his side as Vice-Curator. Upon command of the clergy, Herr Stein next demanded of Pastor Banschel that he leave the seminary "voluntarily". Upon the Pastor's refusal, Father Jezierski, the Catholic religious instructor, declared that he would not teach so long as Pastor Banschel remained the Director of the Seminary, and hereupon the Board granted him a holiday. Herr Stein has now threatened Pastor Banschel with forcible expulsion.

Truly a most extraordinary condition of things! The ban in the church, the demand that no Protestant be permitted to become Director of a Seminary, the temporal authorities who support the presumption of the clergy and carry out their orders—all this breathes



D. Hesekei, The Former Superintendent-General in Posen

forth such a spirit of black mediaevalism, that we can contemplate it only with utmost astonishment. Things have already gone so far in Poland that liberty of conscience and the equal rights of the confessions are persecuted, and that this country drives out men of Protestant faith."

The same lack of authority on the part of the State in relation to the Catholic Church, is evidenced by the outrageous proceedings which accompanied the election of President Narutovicz and his murder a few days after the election. Narutovicz, who until 1918 had lived as a civil engineer in Switzerland, was, like Pilsudski, a non-Catholic. This was sufficient to start a vicious agitation against the President, in which the Catholic clergy assumed the leadership. After Narutovicz's election a mourning service was celebrated over a black-draped catafalque in the church at Kosten in the province of Posen. When the agitation against the President had reached such a pitch that an assassin appeared on the scene in order to free Poland from the disgrace of this Presidency, mourning services were again instituted. But these were not held in honour of the murdered President of the State, *but in honour of his murderer, who was glorified as a true patriot.* It was reported from the town of Lomza at the time, that officials of the Law Courts, other State officials and the representatives of the Autonomous Government had all attended these services. This was, no doubt, also the case in many other places. *There was no Polish Government, no Polish attorney-general that dared to utter a protest against this hero-worship of a murderer!*

It is true that there are large bodies of opinion in Poland for which the Catholic bias of the Polish state does not go far enough, but this does not alter the general aspect of the case. These opinions prevail among the circles which gathered about the influential Jesuit Father Lutoslavski, who died in 1923. They will not be satisfied until "everything non-Polish and non-Catholic in the State of Poland shall have been torn up by the roots." (Father Gogolevski in a School Church-service at Lodz before Polish and German school children.)

In addition to this Catholic standpoint on the part of the Polish State,¹ there is another factor that the United Evangelical Church must take into consideration — the policy of *de-Germanizing* pursued by every Polish government up to the present.

The Entente, to be sure, forced Poland to sign a *Minorities Protection Treaty*. Poland signed only with reluctance. But in the well-known proclamation of June 30, 1919, which was issued by the Supreme Polish Popular Council, acting as Mandatory of the Polish Government, immediately after the signing of the Versailles Treaty, and addressed to "Our fellow citizens of German nationality", Poland took upon herself to repeat the principal clauses of this enforced treaty.

"The Republic of Poland, in accordance with its traditions of freedom", this document runs, "guarantees to its citizens of German nationality *full equality, absolute religious freedom, freedom of conscience, access to state offices, freedom to cultivate their mother tongue and their national idiosyncrasies and absolute protection of property.*" The principal stipulations of the Minorities Protection Treaty were finally "anchored" in the Constitution of the Polish State.

In spite of all this, *no Polish Government has to this day troubled its head about these provisions.* On entering upon office, to be sure, every government has been full of fine phrases for the Germans and has promised them to protect their rights, but the real attitude of the state towards the Germans in Posen and West Prussia has been the same from the first day on, and, is directed towards the absolute *de-germanizing* of the "Westmark". The instigator of this policy is the Polish "Westmark-Society".

¹ A Catholic Assembly in Dirschau in June, 1924, adopted a resolution which ran as follows: "We demand (a) That the alliance of Poland with the Virgin Mary be legally renewed in a solemn ceremony performed by the President of the State. (b) That Poland receive a special privilege on the occasion of the Maria Festival "The Queen of the Crown of Poland" on the first Sunday in May, or on May 3. (c) That an image of the Virgin of Czenstochau be struck on the Polish gold coins, with the inscription "Queen of the Crown of Poland."

It is not possible to enter into details in this place as to the measures employed by the Polish policy of de-Germanization. We need only briefly recall the removal of all Germans from state and communal positions, the expulsion of landed estate tenants and settlers on the strength of the nefarious law of June 14, 1920, (which, too late, was declared by the League of Nations to be illegal), the liquidation of German nationals, which at the present moment is being most rigourously proceeded with. Further there is the persecution of the German press, whose members are punished with imprisonment for every criticism of the policy of de-Germanization, as "making state institutions appear despicable", for every vigorous utterance against the French policy of hatred towards Germany as "constituting a public nuisance". Then there was the dissolution of the "German League", (*Deutschtumsbund*) in October, 1923. (This was the political and cultural organisation of the German element.) The leader was alleged to have been guilty of high treason, but none dared to make a public charge against him. One measure, the systematic destruction of the German schools, deserves a more thorough presentation, since church interests are here immediately concerned. But school questions shall be treated later in a separate division.

It is self-understood that this de-Germanization of Posen and West Prussia must exercise the deepest influence upon the position of the Protestant church. The emigrants from Poland were nearly all Protestant. That is to say, the Protestant parishes have lost on an average 75 *per cent* of their members. This number is still greater in the cities. The town of Posen numbers to-day scarcely 5000 Protestants as compared to 65,000 before the war. In Thorn, which has four Protestant churches, which were served before the war by seven clergy, only one clergyman remains. In the country the newer settler-parishes, founded since 1908, and the settlements of officials which came into being particularly at railway junctions, have been almost entirely dissolved. But apart from the districts lying close to the frontier, which in part constitute practically a closed German territory, there is

scarcely a single Protestant parish which has not been shaken to its depths by the policy of de-Germanization.

A less immediate consequence of this policy is the combative attitude which the Polish state adopts towards the United Protestant Church. The Polish popular soul, trained to that fusion of religion and politics peculiar to Catholicism, simply cannot comprehend the idea that the church can minister in a purely religious sense, without any political idea. The mere existence of the Protestant church, which consists principally of Germans and is conducted by Germans, seems to such minds to constitute a menace to the Polish state.

However, this is already entering upon details. Everything which has hitherto been said concerning the Catholic bias of the Polish state, or the de-Germanization policy of all Polish governments, is intended only to render it easier for the reader to understand the position in which the United Protestant Church in Poland finds itself to-day.

2. The Legal Position of the United Evangelical Church in the Polish State.

The legal position of the United Evangelical Church in Poland is as undefined to-day as it was on the first day of the new regime. There have been conferences, but they have been without result. It is therefore purposeless to repeat here in detail the various stages of a development which never led to any tangible result.

The legal basis for further contingencies was first fixed in Articles 113 and 115 of the Polish Constitution, passed March 17, 1921. These articles read as follows:

(113) Every religious organization recognized by the State has the right to hold public religious services in common, may regulate its internal affairs independently, may own and acquire movable and immovable property, may have the management and disposal of it: it may retain possession and enjoyment of its foundations and funds, also of its institutions for religious, educational and charitable purposes. No religious community, however, may stand in opposition to the laws of the state.

(115) The churches of the religious minorities and the other legally recognized religious communities are to govern themselves by their own laws, the recognition of which will not be refused by the State, unless they contain provisions which are contrary to the law.

The relation of the State to these churches and confessions will be legally determined, after an understanding has been reached with their rightful representatives.

These two articles Nos. 113 and 115 of the State Constitution, must be taken in conjunction with Article 114 already quoted which refers to "Religions with equal rights" beside the Catholic profession, — they at last furnished a firm legal foundation upon which further discussions might be based. But if the leading circles of the United Evangelical Church had cherished the hope that a definite arrangement would now be arrived at, they were indeed deceived.

There has been no lack of negotiations and proposals. On March 17 and 18, 1922 there were negotiations in Warsaw. The (Polish) Evangelical Church, the (German) United Evangelical Church of Posen, the United Evangelical Church of Prussia, as the Mother Church of the former and the Polish State were all duly represented. Agreement on the great majority of points was reached without great difficulty and embodied in a protocol, which, however, was not to be binding. There was agreement upon the rights for the minority churches of levying church taxes, the financial co-operation of the State towards church-requirements, the legal position of the clergy, the exemption of the churches from taxes and rates, the principle of equal treatment of all churches. The churches, on their part, recognized the right of the State to authorize church tax proposals and the right to make a reservation when the highest position in the Church was to be filled, the right to demand an oath of allegiance from the clergy. The use of the German language in church services and administration was to be guaranteed as well as the retention of clergymen and church officials, at present installed in office, even if they should not be Polish citizens. The maintenance of purely spiritual relations to the Mother Church in Germany was to be allowed. This right was to include the right of the

Posen Church to send representatives to the General Synod in Berlin, of training theological students in Germany and rely upon all benefit-funds (for social relief etc.) of the Mother Church so long as no sufficient substitutes for study and benefit were provided in Poland. The only point where no substantial agreement was reached between German and Polish delegates, was the question of the Posen representation on the General Synod in Berlin: the German demand was for full representation with voting rights, while the Poles were willing to concede only the right of the Posen delegates to attend the General Synod as guests.¹

Soon after the Warsaw negotiations the Posen Consistorium of the United Evangelical Church submitted to the Polish Government on May 15, 1922 proposals for carrying the Warsaw protocol into legal form. These proposals are printed in full in Appendix II. They merely demand what had been agreed upon. In the contentious matter of the Posen representatives in the General Synod of Berlin the original German proposals were substantially repeated. These proposals did in no way demand an administrative dependence upon the Mother Church, and did not go beyond the principles of "free and unrestricted relations of the Church in Posen with its Mother Church", which were advocated by the Bishops' Conference in Upsala.

The Polish Government declared in answer that it could not agree to the Posen proposals. It declared itself ready for verbal negotiations; these, however, never took place. Another set of proposals, laid before the Government by the *Landes Synode* on Jan. 22, 1924, has received no official answer. This means that to this day, that is in the seventh year of the Polish Republic, the United Evangelical Church has no legal status. The Church may proffer claims based upon the very general expressions of the Constitution and the Minority Laws, but she has no fixed rights, no clear legal position, no secure protection against the arbitrariness of the

¹ The main points of the Warsaw protocol are dealt with more fully in Appendix I.



Church Guild's House at Posen.

local official. This policy of the Polish state is deliberate. It wants to shelve the question indefinitely, till the de-Germanizing policy of the state shall have weakened the Church so effectively, that, diminished in numbers and bereft of all influence, it shall have become amenable to the wishes of the State.

This is no mere hypothesis, but the Polish Prime Minister Sikorski has stated the connexion between the delay of the long expected answer and the de-Germanizing policy of the Polish Government in very plain terms.

When on April 10 1923, a deputation of the Evangelical Consistory pressed for an answer to the draft proposals, he gave no immediate answer, but referred to the subject in his speech in the Posen Town Hall the same evening. With great emphasis the Prime Minister announced that a state of defence for the consolidation of the Polish element must be created. This led him to the question of the national Minorities and he hoped that the Germans would not misunderstand him. He would at the same time make use of this occasion to deliver his answer to the representatives of the Evangelical Consistory. The irregular conditions prevailing to-day in the Evangelical Church must cease; church representatives must be appointed with whom the Polish Government could open up negotiations. The present proposals from this source were unacceptable. The Government would communicate its standpoint to the persons in question by means of the Voivodes. His speech was received with loud applause, which grew still louder as he continued:

"It is in its immediate interest (i. e. that of the Church) that the *great historical process of the de-Germanization of the western Voivodeships* should be completed as soon as possible. It is always the same story, *might is right*, the weak are reckoned to the defeated and must go to the wall, and I herewith declare to-day, on the eve of the consummation of the liquidation of German property—that the leniency, hesitancy and lack of determination which have hitherto characterized the Polish attitude, must be brought to an end."

After this lengthy political speech, he spoke with thirty press representatives on the same theme and announced that

it was the intention of the present Government to liquidate the German element in the West Provinces with all energy and at the same time to reject in unmistakeable terms all decisions arrived at by the League of Nations or by the Hague International Court of Arbitration, as not being binding upon the Polish Government!

The Sikorski Government has long been out of office, but all its successors have maintained the same attitude. It is therefore to be feared that the legal position of the Church in a State which insists on every tittle of its power, and in consequence of this feeling, sets itself not only above international duties, but even above the decrees of its own Constitution, can be made really secure only as the result of a severe struggle.

3. The Evil Consequences for the United Evangelical Church of its Indefinite Legal Position.

The absurdity of the complaint continually raised by Polish public opinion against the Church, that it intentionally delays the regulation of its relations to the Polish State, is made plain by the fact that no one has such an interest in this regulation as the Church itself. All the privations and difficulties, humiliations and persecutions which the Church has had to endure during the past six years, were in the last instance a consequence of this condition. In the first place, the Polish State recognized no obligations towards the Church. To be sure, it emphasized frequently enough that it was the lawful successor of the Prussian State, also in relation to the United Evangelical Church, it even insisted stubbornly upon the demand that the President of Poland should be recognized as the legal successor to the Prussian King with all his former rights of *Summus Episcopus*. But the Poles unblushingly demanded rights in the Church which even the Prussian State had never enjoyed. It is well-known that in the year 1920 the Voivode of Posen wished to send a Commissary to the district Synod who should

have the right to speak there: this Commissary was supposed to announce to the Synod the latest news which the Voivode had received from the Government in Warsaw with regard to the question of the Church Constitution. This interference of the Voivode in the rights of the Synod could be prevented only in that the meeting of the Synod was called off. The procedure of the Voivode against the Rev. Dr. Staemmler, member of the Consistory, which extends over several years, is equally well-known. On May 7, 1920, he was removed from his office as a member of the Evangelical Consistory, by order of the Voivode, without any reason being given. It was discovered later that this measure was the result of a speech made by the Rev. Dr. Staemmler at the General Synod in Berlin, in which he had done no more than paint a truthful picture of the situation of the Church in Poland. This speech actually called forth an examination on the charge of treason and the uttering of anti-Polish sentiments, which naturally came to nothing.

Hence, while the Polish State demanded very extensive rights over the Church, it did not in any way regard itself as the successor of the Prussian State in the matter of its duties. Not only the legal succession, but also Article 9 of the Minorities Protection Treaty would have required that the Polish State grant to the Evangelical Church in proportion to the number of its members as part of the entire population, a just share of the State funds expended for clerical and cultural ends. Nothing of the kind happened. As early as 1919 all State payments for church purposes, particularly for the salaries of the clergy, were stopped. Up to the present, they have not been resumed. The preliminary estimates of the Polish State for 1925 set aside 16 755 912 Zloty for the Roman Catholic confession in the Budget for religious confessions. For all other confessions — the membership of which comprises at least 30 per cent of the total population — only 1 579 130 Zloty are set aside. Of this sum 451 864 Zloty fall to the Protestant Confession, whereas according to the proportion of population, it is entitled to double this amount. A monthly salary of 451 Zloty is set

aside for Superintendent-General the Rev. Dr. Blau, whereas the sum assigned to Superintendent-General Bursche* is 574 Zloty. It is questionable whether the subsidies set apart for the United Evangelical Church will really be paid out, for though they were included in the Budgets of previous years, they have nevertheless never been paid.

The same conditions hold true with relation to the State advowson upon individual church parishes. The right of advowson is demanded. But the manner in which this right of patronage is fulfilled, is shown, for example, by a recent case which occurred in a parish whose church roof had been faulty for years. As long as the damage might still have been made good at a small expenditure, the parish received neither permission to have the repairs made, nor the patronal contribution. Now, at length, when the roof is almost beyond repair, the permission has been received, and the patronal contribution — promised. At the same time however, the parish was informed that there were no funds to pay this contribution; the parish should temporarily advance the money! The parish will have to wait a long time before its expenses are refunded.

It is evident that it has never occurred to the Polish Government that it should render any possible support to the Evangelical Church, although this was something self-understood in the case of the Catholic church. The fate of the *Wittenburg* Preachers' Seminary was a case in point. Had but a little good-will prevailed and some understanding for the duty of parity of treatment towards the various confessions, it would have been only natural that this solitary place of training for young Protestant theologians in the territory of the United Evangelical Church, should have been preserved for the church. This thought occurred to no one, and to speak openly, no Protestant had ever dared to hope that it would. It was, however, an act of open provocation of the Evangelical church, to turn this place of training for *Protestant theologians* into an educational institute for young girls under the direction of *nuns* of the Immaculate Conception. One should not fail to mention here the vain efforts made

by the Evangelical Church to retain at least the library of the Preachers' Seminary. It is the only important Protestant-Theological Library in Poland. The costs of the equipment as well as the arrangement of the building for the use of the Preachers' Seminary, were originally paid at the time by the Prussian State, which also allowed the church an annual sum for the further upkeep of the library. In addition to this, the library was extended by means of gifts, among others 1500 volumes were presented by Prof. von der Goltz. It was thus plain that the Evangelical Church was the legal owner of the library. It would have been only natural to leave the Church in possession of it, the more so as it was not possible for the Polish State to put it to any other use. But up to the present, all attempts to recover the Library have failed. To begin with, the standpoint is assumed that the Library represents a piece of German property, subject to liquidation. The statements of the Polish Government then made it clear that it was a question of retaining the property of the United Evangelical Church in Poland as a whole and protecting it from seizure by the Prussian established church. It is in strange contradiction to this avowed purpose that the Library has been offered to Superintendent-General Bursche in Warsaw, according to his own statements. At all events, up to the present nothing has been settled in the matter.

The Polish State took up the same attitude in the matter of the Consistorial Office Building and the official houses for the Consistorial President and the Superintendent-General, as in the question of the Wittenburg Preachers' Seminary. Both these buildings were built in former years (1894 and 1908) by the Prussian State, exclusively for the use of the Evangelical Church. The ownership of the two houses has undoubtedly been transferred to the Polish State. It refused, however, to recognize any obligation on the part of the Prussian State towards the church and demanded rent for the further use of the buildings. The apartment of the Consistorial President, which had no longer been used by the church since the departure of the President Dr. Balan, was arranged for the use of two Polish higher officials. Super-

intendent-General Dr. Blau was asked to give up several rooms. His dwelling had fourteen rooms, but according to a ministerial Ordinance no more than six rooms could be used for an official apartment, and he was therefore to give up all rooms in excess of this number. Finally three rooms were given up and the Great Hall, which had been arranged for reception purposes, and with these the authorities declared themselves satisfied. Without warning, the furniture of this Festival Hall was one day cleared out and taken away. Singular conditions were however imposed upon the Superintendent-General for the use of the remaining living-rooms. The Government was to have the right to evict him without notice and without offering him another apartment, in case of non-fulfilment of any clause in the Contract. Legal redress there was none. The Church could not possibly have considered it compatible with the dignity of its supreme leader to have complied with such humiliating conditions, which would entirely have delivered him over to the arbitrariness of the Polish Government, and so Superintendent-General the Rev. Dr. Blau gave up his official apartment and moved to an empty vicarage in the town.

It is impossible not to observe in the incidents just described, the intention to provoke and humiliate the Evangelical Church. Indeed this intention is continually apparent in the attitude of the Polish officials, particularly in Voivode Celichowski, the last Posen Voivode but one.

Although the Poles know well enough how much they owe to the Catholic Church and its dignitaries, (a knowledge which often involves a certain danger for the dignity of the state), yet they display a measure of intentional contempt for the Evangelical Church and its highest representatives.

In the Memorandum directed by the Consistory to the League of Nations in 1920, there was a passage in which the Consistory defends itself against the reproach of not having consulted sufficiently with the Polish officials. Here, point for point, are cited all the attempts of the Consistory to obtain verbal discussions of the questions pending with the Polish authorities. Most of the

questions in this direction simply remained unanswered. Several times a date was set for verbal discussion. The church representatives duly appeared, only to be told that they could not be received. If, however, a verbal discussion really did take place, then it usually passed off with great politeness, but nothing whatever resulted. This has been the experience of everyone who has had to do with Polish officials. In the verbal discussions he appears to have achieved everything he could have wished. Nevertheless, the written judgment often proves to be the exact opposite of what had been verbally agreed upon.

But it was not only in this one question of personal contact with the Polish officials that the Consistory was forced to undergo the most offensive treatment. In all practical matters which were laid before the Polish officials by the Consistory, the same procedure was repeated. If the contents were of a disturbing nature, the memorandum simply remained unanswered. Communications of the Consistory which were couched in the German language were simply returned. In a Memorandum of the Polish representative to the League of Nations we read:

"The Polish Government exercises great care in seeing that the officials of every category in the territory formerly Prussian possess a full knowledge of both Polish and German, and that the latter language should be put upon a footing of equality in all the foreign service of the state. In every part of the territory formerly Prussian, every German-speaking Polish citizen has the right to address himself verbally or in writing to the courts and all other official quarters in his own tongue, and to receive the answer in the same language. The Polish Government is fully aware of the fact that the rights which have been accorded to it by the treaty in the matter of the national language, cannot be fully applied until the German-speaking Polish citizens shall have acquired a sufficient knowledge of Polish. It exercises and is determined to continue in future to exercise the greatest tolerance in this question."

We see that this pronouncement serves only to show how little significance can be attached to any Polish official announcement. Besides this, the conduct of the representatives of the Consistory cited above, shows plainly enough that a

man at the very head of the Polish Government was capable of practically denying the very existence of the solemn declarations of the Polish representatives before the League of Nations.

Another case in which the Evangelical Church was contemptuously treated by the Voivode of Posen must be mentioned. On October 11, 1921, the Evangelical Preachers' Seminary in Posen was solemnly inaugurated. The Ministry in Posen had been previously informed of this; an invitation to the opening ceremony had been sent, of which no notice was taken. On October 16, 1921, a communication arrived from the Voivode, couched in the following words:

According to Par. 9 of the Law of May 11, 1873, relating to the training and nomination of clergy, an institute of learning of this kind is under the control of the State. Since the Consistory has taken upon itself the foundation and the inauguration without taking Par. 6 into consideration, I hereby close the Teaching Institute by order of the Ministry appointed for the region formerly Prussian.

At the same time I would state that the Ministry which requested me to issue the order wished me to lay all emphasis upon the provision that all communications which the Evangelical Consistory addresses to any Ministry of the Polish State, must pass through my hands.

I demand that the Consistory should at once dismiss the theological candidates who visit the aforementioned institute of learning, that it should close the Institute until permission to open has been received, and that I be informed within three days that this has been done, otherwise I shall order the school to be forcibly closed."

The law of May 11, 1873, one of the so-called Kulturkampf laws which served the Voivode as a pretext for his procedure, had long been abrogated. It also appeared later that the claim of the Voivode to act by order of the Ministry, was incorrect. At any rate, the Ministry denied having issued any such instructions.

Still more characteristic than the procedure against the Preachers' College is the passage in the above-mentioned communication of the Voivode, in which he demands of the Consistory that it let its correspondence pass through the hands of the Voivode. The deliberate intention to humiliate is most

obvious here. At least, it is scarcely credible that Archbishop Dalbor was ever expected to allow his correspondence with the highest Polish officials to be transmitted by the Voivode of Posen.

The procedure with regard to the official dwelling of the Superintendent-General already revealed the fact that neither the dignity of his person nor his high position served to protect Superintendent-General Blau from offensive treatment. This was apparent in the somewhat comic events connected with the religious essays which the Rev. Blau published every Sunday in the *Posen Tageblatt*. On March 6, 1921, an essay appeared under the title "Heroism". These purely religious remarks were concluded thus: "There is much fear of suffering in our days, much flight from the Cross, little spirit of sacrifice and of heroism. If it were otherwise — perhaps our parishes would not have melted away as they have, there would be less Church and school misery. Let us put ourselves under the Cross of the Lord; let us take him for our model. Let the heroism of the disciple kindle itself at the heroism of the Master!"

In these words Polish officialdom discovered an attempt to incite revolt in the Polish State and render it contemptible through false statements. The paper was forbidden to appear for three days. Soon after, on March 20, the day of the Plebiscite in Upper Silesia, objection was raised to an article entitled "Plebiscite".

It was Confirmation Sunday and the Evangelical communicants were exhorted to give their vote in the decisive battle of life to the heavenly King, Jesus Christ. This time the Editor got off with a warning. He was supposed to have made furtive political references to the plebiscite in Upper Silesia in this article.

On another occasion researches were made as to who could be meant by the expression "the Old Enemy".¹ And on still another occasion certain people felt themselves hit by a medi-

¹ Referring to a phrase in Luther's famous hymn: „Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott.“

tation entitled "True Greatness". In this paper the words occurred:

"How many things claim to be great in this world! And greatest of all and most admired appear to be those men and classes of humanity who stamp upon right and justice, who have no regard for laws and ordinances, who tear down all moral and ethical barriers and set up the rule of unbridled license. The mob adores such spirits and surrounds them with a nimbus of greatness as being worthy of admiration and emulation."

These words were considered to constitute an attack upon the Polish State, and the Rev. Blau was obliged to appear in person at the Starostvo Grolskie and justify himself.

In the main, the battle against the Consistory and above all against the Rev. Blau, was left to the Polish press, which to this day is never tired of throwing suspicion upon this peaceful scholar, who would prefer to devote himself entirely to the quiet labour of re-erecting the church entrusted to him, rather than to being an enemy of the Polish State. No opportunity to stir up the populace is left unused. When he visited Soldau for the first time, on the occasion of a general church visitation, the *Dziennik Poznanski* at once announced:

"They (that is the Rev. Dr. Blau and Dr. Nehring, Member of the Consistory) are forever finding something to do in the district of Soldau, and after every visitation a distinct spirit of opposition to the Polish state and to the Poles is plainly to be remarked." When the *English* M. P. Sir Willoughby Dickinson visited the churches of Poland on behalf of the World League of Friendship, the Rev. Blau was reproached for not having invited *Polish* pastors to the meetings held in connection with Sir Willoughby Dickinson's stay in Posen. The writer forgot to mention that there are *no Polish pastors in Posen*, and that in Warsaw, where they exist, they had five days' opportunity to get into touch with Sir Willoughby.

About a year ago the *Kurier Poznanski* declared that the Rev. Blau had been sent a few years before the war from Berlin to Posen in order to carry on anti-Polish propaganda. In reality, his transference from Wernigerode to Posen was not connected in any way with any political mission.



Broken Windows in the Kiyazhiche at Tientsin after the Explosion of the Admiration.

He was supposed to have forbidden the pastors to learn and to make use of the Polish language, whereas a glance at the official Consistory journal would have sufficed to inform the *Kurier* that the learning of Polish is impressed upon the Pastors as a duty and the holding of church services in Polish ordered according to the local needs. He is also supposed to depose pro-Polish pastors, and to replace them by "Hakatists" (strongly anti-Polish elements). In reality there have been no depositions for years and the only one which did recently become necessary had nothing to do with political matters. Even utterances made by the Rev. Blau in 1912, when he described the Evangelical Church in Posen as fostering patriotic feeling, have been dug out and exploited by this Press.

This whole lying press campaign however, takes place with the silent *approval* and *toleration* of the Polish authorities.

Such being the attitude of the highest Polish officials towards the United Evangelical Church as a whole, and towards its highest representatives, it is not surprising that the lower officials believe they can treat the Church and its representatives as shabbily as they like. I do not consider it my task in this place to describe everything which Evangelical Pastors and parishes have undergone in these six years. If all the Pastors in Posen-Pommerellia would submit a report upon the subject "What I have experienced at the hands of Polish officials," it would form an extensive book, and precisely its monotony would make of it a shocking document of arbitrariness and brutal acts of violence on the part of the Polish State which would be singularly illustrative of the much-vaunted "traditional tolerance" of the Polish State. There are doubtless men in leading positions, Starosts, Mayors and so on, who take pains to administer justice even to the Germans and Evangelicals. But the great mass of these officials aim at displaying their efficiency by trying to carry out their Government's de-Germanization policy in practical form, regardless of law and constitution. In addition to this there is the fact that through personal channels these officials are much more subject to the influence of the Catholic clergy than

even the highest officials of the State. This also regulates and directs their attitude towards the Evangelical Church.

Justice, to be sure, demands that a distinction should be drawn between the first few years after the erection of the Polish State and the last three or four years of quieter development.

The years 1919 and 1920 were war years, 1919 for Posen, 1920 for West Prussia. Violent deeds are inevitable in such times. Nevertheless it would have been possible for the civil officials to act as a moderating influence upon the measures of the military, if they had so desired. Instead of this, they called in military aid in many instances.

At this point I may perhaps be permitted to speak of *my own* experiences. It is not as if I held my own experiences to be particularly important, except inasmuch as they show by force of one example, how the relation of the individual pastor or the individual church parish shaped itself with regard to the subordinate Polish official. In order to do full justice to the Poles, and to explain their behaviour towards me, I remark in advance that I was active politically. I believe however that I can say with a good conscience that in gathering together the German element and representing German interests against arbitrary treatment and illegal behaviour of officials, I never overstepped the bounds set me by my being a German citizen. In what follows I shall confine myself mainly to matters bearing on the Church.

My parish was Schoensee, diocese Briesen, West Prussia. On January 20, 1920, the neighbourhood was occupied by Polish troops.

On February 5, I called upon the Rev Wilemski in Briesen, a Catholic to whom the temporary direction of the schools in the district had been transferred in order to consult with him as to the preservation of the German schools. The conversation was perfectly polite, but it remained without any positive results.

On the morning of February 10, I received a written order from the Mayor to have the bell of the Evangelical church set ringing to celebrate the complete occupation of West Prussia by Polish troops. I explained to the Mayor that I was not in a position to obey this order, since there would not be time to summon the Parish Church Council to form a resolution in the matter, and I also called his attention to the official proclamation declaring that the justifiable feelings of the Germans should be respected. Although the Mayor promised that in case of my refusal the bell-ringing should not be carried out by force, the verger was none the less afterwards compelled by the police to ring the bell.

It was characteristic that the order to ring the bell was transmitted to the Catholic congregations by the Archbishop, whereas the Evangelical congregations simply received the order from the police, without the church officials having previously been informed. The Parish Church Council protested to the Voivode in Thorn and received the answer that the Mayor had not had the right to order the bells to be rung, but he was entitled to make such a request, and in case of his request being refused, should have reported to his superiors.

On February 22, at 9 o'clock on a Sunday morning, five soldiers appeared to search my house for arms. After the search, which lasted three-quarters of an hour, the church was also searched, a quarter of an hour before the beginning of the service, when many of the congregation were already present. A second searching of the church during the service could only with difficulty be prevented. A protest was made to the General Commando, and some months later an answer was received which concluded with the following words: "The behaviour of the soldiers was above reproach, and gave no ground for the protest sent in by Herr Müller, inasmuch as there were only a couple of people in the church during the revision and not, as Herr Müller lyingly states, the greater part of the congregation. With regard to the information received, Herr Müller is hereby warned to write more cautiously in future, and in a tone of moderation, to avoid all lying statements and not to interfere in purely military affairs. Should this occur again, the aforementioned will be brought before the Court without further notice, and punished for contempt of officials."

On April 18, a Church Social Evening was held. Its dissolution by the police could only with difficulty be prevented. The excuse given for this was that I had obtained the permission direct from the Starost instead of from his subordinates, the local police officials.

The regular *District Synod* took place on May 5, in Briesen. The proceedings were interrupted by the appearance of the District Commandant, accompanied by the District Secretary. It was not easy to make it clear to them that such a Synod was not a fortuitous assembly but a constitutional church institution. The police had been duly informed of the Synod beforehand.

During the night of June 1, stones were thrown at my house and windows broken.

On August 11, at the time when the Russian Bolshevik army was rapidly nearing us, I called upon the Starost in order to call his attention to the threatening attitude adopted by the Polish population towards the Germans. The Starost acknowledged that he was aware of the existence of this feeling and also said that according to his investigations, all rumours of German plans for a

rising were unfounded, but out of fear of losing his popularity, he could not decide to address a few reassuring words to the Polish population.

On the afternoon of Aug. 15, I drove to Heinrichsberg to conduct a service. As I was preparing for the service, the house in which I had alighted was suddenly surrounded by heavily-armed citizen soldiery, who had followed me on their cycles. I was able to hold the service, and during its progress, the house in which I had alighted was searched for concealed arms.

At noon on Aug. 17, a short battle with a Bolshevik patrol took place at Schoensee. In the evening Polish military arrived. I was *arrested*, accused of having organized the German revolt. After vicarage and church had been searched in vain for weapons, I was again set free.

On the morning of August 18, a detachment once more invaded my home. I was *maltreated*, being struck in the face, and received several blows from rifle-butts, whereupon my house was searched and I was arrested. In the course of the afternoon, I was again liberated, though a ruse was once more employed to persuade me to re-enter my cell for a short time, and I was not again set at liberty. The next morning I was transported with fourteen other victims to Thorn, and we were first locked up in a cellar of the police barracks. The next morning we were forced to clean out the quarters of the men, and it was plainly to be perceived that we were given specially humiliating work, such as the cleaning of cuspidors. I was also led alone into the guard-room at midday. The sentry who had me in charge whispered to his comrade that I was a parson, and I was thereupon forced to clean the guard-room, being cursed and pushed about during the process. Later on the treatment improved. Two days later we were transferred for examination to the military prison. I was not examined until August 26, when, as a result of the examination, I was dismissed on the evening of August 27.

During the later investigation of these occurrences by commissions from Posen and Warsaw, everything was done to hush up the matter. It was characteristic that Mayor Wronski, of Schoensee, the very man whom we Germans regarded as the principal offender in these outrages, acted as interpreter during the examination, until we demanded a different one. None of the guilty persons were punished, and none of the persons damaged received any compensation. On October 11, I was summoned before the examining judge at Thorn. I was charged by the Starost on the following counts:

(1) With having agitated against the Polish State at a meeting held in Gollub. I was able to prove that I had not attended this meeting.



! Window in the Kreuzkirche at Posen after the Explosion
of a Gasworks.

(2) With having been guilty of plotting against the Polish State by trying to found a patronate for the district of Briesen, for the purpose of maintaining the Evangelical Nursing station and the German private schools.

A few days later, I received the information that proceedings against me had been suspended "for want of proofs."

The meetings of the Y.W.C.A., which took place in the office of the vicarage, were put under *police surveillance* during these months.

A communication was received from the Law Courts in Thorn to the effect that the official conveyance of a piece of house property for which the church congregation had applied, could not be granted. The parish had bought the property from the Prussian Settlements Commission in 1919.

On November 17, the Buss-Tag, or Day of Atonement, the Poles held their weekly market.

On May 23, 1921, the Protestant schoolchildren were forced to remove to the former *Catholic* school. This had been determined upon in a meeting of the School deputation, to which I, as the only evangelical member of the school committee, had cautiously not been invited. I therefore put in a protest, especially as the new rooms were not in any way ready for occupation. There were no wall-diagrams, no inkpots, no desks with lids and no cupboards. In spite of my protest the evacuation of the rooms previously in use was forcibly carried out. A protest to the Inspector of Schools remained unanswered. I went to Thorn to speak in person with the School Board of Guardians. Here the matter was turned topsy-turvy and I was reproached with disloyalty because I had published a report of the proceedings in my Parish Magazine; particular attention was called to the fact that a number of my Parish Magazines had been sent to Germany and were calculated to evoke a picture of the prevailing conditions in Poland which would damage its prestige in Germany. At the same time, no one could deny that my reports were in accordance with the truth.

On June 5, 1921, the last divine service took place in the school at Plywaczewo. When the chairman of the parish council was requested to hand out the key to the empty Evangelical School in which the Divine Services had been regularly held since 1917, he complied, but hinted that the School Committee of the Protestant School which consisted solely of Catholics (!), had decreed in the presence of the School Inspector to permit no divine Services to be held in the future. An immediate enquiry directed to the School Inspector was not vouchsafed an answer. Four weeks later, when the next Divine Service was to take place, the key was refused. All written and oral complaints addressed to the School Board of

Guardians in Thorn remained unanswered up to the time of my departure from Poland in November, 1921.

On June 28, 1921, an incendiary article, packed with lies and distortions, appeared in the *Głos Wabrzeski*, the official district organ, which had the immediate effect of subjecting me to molestation by Polish workmen in the public street. I requested the State Attorney to take proceedings either against me or against the *Głos*. Both were refused. A suit which I brought privately was subjected to such delays that the case did not come up before I left.

On August 8, 1921, the Board of Guardians in Posen received a communication from the Ministry there to the effect that I must leave Poland within three months. On September 15, 1921, I received the Order of Expulsion, to take effect no later than November 5.

This brings my personal experiences to an end. They belong, as I wish once to emphasize, to the first disturbed years and are therefore in part, characteristic only of these.

I should especially assign the arrests and the occurrences connected with these to this period. *Many clergymen were forced to undergo similar experiences.* The numerous arrests and interments of Posen clergymen in the camp at Szczypiorno are well known. After the ratification of the Peace Treaty, conditions in Posen became more settled, and the arrests of clergymen ceased almost entirely. On the other hand, such cases occurred again and again in Pommerellia, especially in the year 1920.

On February 26, 1920, Superintendent Rogozinski was arrested in Briesen in connection with a meeting of members of the local School Board. The resolution to hold this meeting had been passed eight days earlier in the presence of Dr. Szczepanski, the Starost, who belongs to the Committee; it was therefore thought unnecessary to apply to the Starost for a special permission. The Starost was also present at the meeting. When the proceedings took a course with which the Poles did not agree, they left the meeting, led by the Starost. A few minutes later, soldiers appeared in order to dissolve the meeting. As it was alleged that the persons present did not leave the premises immediately, three members of the Committee, Superintendent Rogozinski among them,

were arrested during the following night. After three days' imprisonment they were set at liberty after the Starost and the District Commandant had just before ordered red placards to be posted up in the town to the effect that the "agitators" mentioned on these by name, would be punished according to the full severity of the law. A Court was thereupon found which satisfied the demands of the Starost and condemned the three "agitators" to the payment of fines.

On July 22, 1920, Pastor Weber of Hoppendorf was arrested. A small sketch-map on a card, which had been sent to him by the *Deutschtumsbund* in Graudenz, had been found in his house. This provided for the establishment of a kind of courier service in the event of any interruption of the postal service. On the basis of this, he was accused of espionage and was forced to spend almost three months in different prisons (Karthaus, Graudenz, Thorn), being subject in part to humiliating treatment. He was finally released on bail of thirty thousand marks. No punishment was inflicted by the Court.

Pastor Heldt of Narzym was arrested on September 3, 1920. He was accused of having held a thanksgiving service after the entry of the Bolsheviks for the liberation from Polish slavery, and of having hung a German flag out of his windows. He had indeed flown the flag, but this was regularly done by all Germans in order that they might be known as Germans and so avoid molestation by the Bolshevik troops. Many Poles did the same at this time. Heldt was at first imprisoned in Graudenz, then in Thorn, and was then dragged to the prison camp of Strzalkovo, and at last to the notorious internment camp of Dombie near Cracow, where at first he received no straw mattress nor rug, insufficient food and was subjected to bad treatment. He was dismissed on October 30. In 1923 he was expelled the country.

Superintendent Waubke (Thorn) was arrested together with a number of respected citizens of Thorn and interned for several weeks. In this case retaliation was alleged as the purpose of the measure.

On June 30, 1920, Vicar Dieball (Graudenz) was arrested for some hours, because the Sunday school children had sung German songs during an excursion, which Vicar Dieball, however, forbade them to do. The Parish Church Council, including the Chairman, Vicar Jacob, protested against the conduct of the police as illegal and wounding to the honour of the evangelical congregation. In consequence they were accused of libelling the Polish State authorities, but were acquitted by the Court.

The best known of the arrests which still occurred in Posen in 1920/21 is the case of Superintendent Rhode, then in Schildberg, now in Posen. Rhode had helped the members of his parish to use the right of Option which had been secured to them by the Peace Treaty. In return for this he was dragged through seven prisons, and spent more than three and a half months in prison before he was liberated in January 1921. His incarceration resulted in serious injury to his health.

Pastor Otto of Kopnitz was arrested for alleged espionage two days before Confirmation Day on March 18, 1921; he was liberated on March 23; he had already been interned for nine weeks in 1919.

Pastor Giersch of the parish of Borui was arrested for several days in August 1920. The German population of this place, misled by Polish spies, had been guilty of certain excesses against the Polish gendarmerie. For this 80 persons, were arrested, among them the local pastor, who had in no way participated in the troubles.

In October 1920 the Polish Minister of War issued an order in which he declared that the numerous arrests of Evangelical ministers of the church had aroused unfavorable attention in foreign lands. In future such arrests were to take place only with his permission. And as a matter of fact, no arrests have taken place since 1921. But in place of these the expulsions have come into force — these will be treated in a special chapter.

The police supervisions of church meetings and sessions which were reported from various places, are

also to be regarded as a political phenomenon of the early period, — the police official undertaking the supervision frequently keeping his cap on his head during the opening prayer. It also came to pass that meetings of Church societies, especially young people's societies, were forbidden, or that some clergymen who held Bible-readings, would be summoned for holding prohibited meetings. The authorities were particularly suspicious of such bible readings, when they did not take place in the churches themselves, and the expulsion of Missionary Jucknat and of the Rev. Wiener, preacher of the Congregation of Brethren in Gross-Reichenau, is no doubt to be attributed to this, as well as the special hostility manifested towards the Vandsburg nurses or sisters, whose chief work may be characterized as evangelical. The originator of a community festival with trumpet-choruses in Montovarsk was examined and accused of having instituted a Bolshevik meeting. I myself remember well that a policeman came to me and made the most minute investigations as to this community, expressing the opinion that it was responsible for spreading Bolshevik ideas.

That this mistrust still exists among the minor Polish authorities, is proved by recent events. On Corpus Christi Day, 1925, the parish of Obornik celebrated an Evangelical service in the regular form through authorized ministers on a piece of property which was entirely enclosed. A trumpet chorus was one of the features of the occasion. The police regarded this as an open meeting which had not been reported, and imposed a fine of thirty Zloty upon the Pastor of the parish, upon the owner of the piece of land and upon the young girl who passed the offertory bag.

In another parish, the Evangelical young peoples' societies are subjected to all kinds of interference. The Y. M. C. A. has a trumpet chorus in which pupils also took part. One day these pupils were fetched from their classrooms and taken to the police-station and subjected to separate examination. Who had given them these instruments? to whom did they belong? who had instructed them? What tunes did they play? They were finally ordered to deliver the

instruments to the police. It was only through the intervention of the Rector that this measure was not enforced. In another village there exists a Y. W. C. A. with about twenty members. It was accustomed to hold its meetings in the class-room. This was forbidden by the District School-Inspector. Hereupon they met in a peasant's house. The Chairman of the Polish Parish Council at once appeared and forbade the meeting. The day following he had each of the young girls render a protocol through the police. Finally, when the pastor of this parish was expelled, the Polish Press was unable to give any other reason for this outrage than the fact that he had been leader of these societies.

The searching of pastors' homes and of the churches are by no means confined to the early period. To be sure they served a particular purpose at this time. In the early days hundreds of vicarages and churches were searched, often in a brutal manner, for concealed arms. As late as March 31, 1921, the church of Schmiegel was subjected to searching and this actually took place by Government orders. Two civil officials and twenty police were employed on this occasion. The reason given for the search was that a denunciation had been made to the effect that some weeks before, at midnight, two unlighted carts, laden with arms and munition, had halted at the church. The belief that the churches were used as arsenals was universally current among the Poles. Could the reason for this be that the Catholic churches were formerly used for such purposes? At any rate, it may easily be verified that in spite of innumerable searches, *not a single forbidden firearm was found in any church or in any vicarage.*

In the year 1923, the searching of vicarages was resumed on a large scale. The main object was to secure incriminating material against the *Deutschtumsbund*. In response to a demand made by the Public Prosecutor of Bromberg, the houses of all leading Germans all over Poland were searched on October 19, 1923, in order to demonstrate once and for all the anti-Polish character of the German organisation. The vicarages suffered particularly. The vicarage in Jutroschin was on this occasion searched for

the third time in a few months. On July 19th the books belonging to the library of the Y. W. C. A. were confiscated by order of the Voivode and were not returned in spite of indubitable proofs of the purchase of the books being provided. On August 6, certain writings of the *Deutschtumsbund* were confiscated by the Court, and on October 19, the whole vicarage was subjected to a search lasting over five hours, which was carried out by three policemen and two civilians. Almost every book and document in the vicar's office-rooms was examined and every box opened. The result of the search was the confiscation of some copies of the "Evangelische Frauenhilfe" (Womens' Guild Monthly) and a letter from the *Deutschtumsbund* relating to the delivery of the Association newspaper. The Rev. Zöckler of Stanislau, who was himself subjected to having his house searched about this time, justly declares:

" . . . But we must utter a protest against the form in which these searches of houses belonging to the clergymen of this country, are conducted. Was it necessary, for example, that during the searching of the vicarages of Stanislau and Ugartsthal, a platoon of police with fixed bayonets should be told off to surround the house in each case, a policeman stationed in each room, and others set to patrol the street so that great public excitement was caused, and the most outrageous rumours were naturally called forth! Was it necessary that subordinate officials, obviously without any of the mental equipment necessary for their task, should be allowed to toss all the correspondence about? These men took quantities of papers, among them clerical documents which had not the remotest connection with political matters. We hear that Pastor Willigmann of Lissa protested successfully against such doings, and eventually carried his point, in that his house was searched by the representative of the Public Prosecutor in person. It seems to us only proper that clergymen who have for years given proof of their absolute loyalty to and respect for the laws of the state, and who enjoy the highest respect of their parishes and the authorities, should be treated with more consideration in such cases. The editor of the parish journal does not write this because he imagines that his position or the cause that he represents could suffer any damage by reason of the searching of his house. On the contrary, the impression created by this whole matter can only be favourable to those affected. But it is regrettable that feelings are aroused in the Evangelical population by such proceedings which could easily have been avoided, if a more tactful form had been chosen. It

has been stated in the Press that the object of these searches was to terrify the Germans and dissuade them from the prosecution of their nationalistic efforts. In such times as ours, however, any attempt to terrorize is apt to have the contrary effect to that which was intended."

The Provincial Synod in Posen in December 1923 decided to raise a protest against the unworthy mistrust of the clergy implied in these searchings. At the same time it must once more be definitely stated that neither in the vicarages nor in the houses of other leading Germans was any material confiscated which could serve as a proof of the guilt of the *Deutschtumsbund*, so that to this day no accusation has been levelled against this organisation.

The measures taken by the Polish authorities against church property damaged the Church more, because their results were permanent.

The initial damage was caused by the military. In Posen in the year 1919 particular preference was shown for quartering the military upon the vicarages, sometimes to such an extent that there was nothing for the vicar to do but to seek a dwelling elsewhere for himself. The vicarages in Görchen and Bialutten are an example of the usual results of such a long military occupation. Everything was in ruins, even church registries and the documents from the parish archives had fallen a prey to the soldiers' passion for destruction. This quartering of troops in vicarages was undertaken even when other accomodation could have been had. In Gross Elsingén the whole military occupation of the village, consisting of a sergeant and twelve men, was quartered in the vicarage; it was expressly forbidden to quarter troops in the hall of the inn.

Another evil consequence of the quartering of military in church buildings was that after the departure of the troops, the buildings were not always returned to the rightful owners. The Parish House in Obornik has not yet been returned to the Evangelical congregation, but is used for the purpose of taking care of *Catholic* youths, all the representations of church

officials, all the protests of the Provincial Synod of 1921 and 1923 were of no avail. The Confirmation Hall of Kupferhammer has forcibly been converted into a police-station (The full case is given in Appendix III).

It is rare that the parish is allowed to determine the destiny of empty vicarages. As a rule they are at once commandeered as homes for police-officials the moment they are vacated by a clergyman, although it may be proposed to call another clergyman into office. The great number of police officials in Poland — in 1924 there were 46,143 — has no doubt caused all kinds of difficulties in providing quarters, especially in country districts, but it is not compatible with the dignity of the Church that it should be compelled to supply this lack at its own expense.

More malicious than anything yet related, however, is the application of the notorious Law of July 14, 1920 to church property. This statute declared that all enactments of the Prussian Settlement Commission, especially sales and conveyances of previous sales which were confirmed after November 11, 1918 (Armistice Day) should be null and void. The protest made by the *Deutschtumsbund* to the League of Nations on November 12, 1921, already established the fact that on the basis of this statute "a great number of pieces of church land, churchyards, vicarage gardens, fields and building-land which, after the price agreed upon had been paid, had been in use for years by Evangelical parishes, would for the most part be taken from these parishes, and even handed over to the local Polish Catholic pastor. In other cases lands and meeting-houses which had been in possession of Evangelical parishes long before November 11, 1918, have been taken from them in similar fashion."

In October 1921, numerous German settlers, who without exception were Polish citizens, received an eviction order, from the Settlers' Office, demanding that they should vacate their homes by December 1, on the score of this same statute and stating that they would not be entitled to damages. The church parish of Kensau, District of Tuchel, also received a demand

to give up possession of church and vicarage by December 1, 1921, but no one has dared to enforce obedience to this order.

The Polish Government may think it a suitable defense against the declaration issued by the *Deutschtumsbund* to assert: "that it only took certain deserted churchyards and other parish property under its immediate management in certain exceptional cases, such as the dissolution of a church parish." But the reliability of such a statement may be gauged by the fact that up to the present not a single church parish in Posen and West Prussia has been dissolved.

In addition to all these major difficulties there are the petty miseries which seem to be of little importance, but which have caused numberless Germans to find further residence in Poland impossible. The church and its representatives have not been preserved from these annoyances. The petty officials had a wide field of action in the sphere of the Polish language policy. It has frequently been said, of course, that all such Polish measures are nothing more than revenge for the former Prussian policy of repression. This conception is false. It must not be forgotten that at the time of the War, Posen-West-Prussia could look back upon one hundred and fifty years of allegiance to Prussia. A century after the occupation of this territory, the official and district notices still appeared in German and Polish, the children were instructed in the Polish tongue, and documents submitted in Polish by the public were received by the officials. Even at the present day, just prior to the reinstatement of the Polish state, numerous communities had retained their old Polish names, even when the majority of the inhabitants were German. Numerous other place-names were only altered so far as to make them easier of pronunciation for the Germans.

The battle of the Polish state against the German language, on the contrary, set in at once. All place-names were changed into Polish even if they were purely German settlements which had not existed at all in the old State of Poland. The German newspapers were forbidden to use the German place-names. Business-men were often given impossibly short



The New Evangelical Church in Honig.

notice to alter all German name-plates and other inscriptions. The Church was also affected by this. It was demanded of the Consistory that the official Church organ be printed in the Polish language, although the majority of the clergy and parish church councillors understood no Polish, and all German inscriptions on church buildings were forbidden. The parish of Lissa succeeded, however, in obtaining a Court decision which declared this procedure of the authorities to be illegal. The demand had been made that the inscription "Evangelisches Gemeindehaus" on the Parish Hall as well as the scriptural text over the entrance, be replaced by inscriptions in the Polish tongue. The Court, however, decided that the ordinances of the Vovoide in this matter of languages had no legal validity: "There is no statute according to which a person may be forced to put up a Polish inscription, everyone is entitled to announce his firm or anything else in the language he prefers." Unfortunately this decision of the Court was made only after the suppression of the German language in the public life of Poland had been practically carried out.

Extraordinary difficulties in the intercourse between the Protestant Church quarters and the Polish authorities were caused by the habit which had obtained almost from the first day of replying only in the Polish language, although the minor Polish authorities had a better command of the German language, at least in writing, than of the Polish. In the meantime things have gone so far that documents submitted in German by church quarters are no longer accepted.

Another wilful annoyance is inflicted upon the pastors and members of the parishes cut up by the new lines of demarcation. Wherever Polish-Catholic parishes were affected, no hindrance was placed upon the traffic across the frontier. On the other hand, Evangelical church life was greatly impeded by the withdrawal of frontier permits or by an absolute interdiction against the passing of the frontier.

It goes without saying that the absolute lack of legal rights accorded to the Evangelical church was also shown in the *refusal* to recognize its *holidays*. Often enough it

appeared as though these Evangelical holidays were purposely or wantonly disturbed. Thus a large fair and cattle-market was held in Graudenz on Good Friday. On the other hand it has happened that Evangelical citizens in Graudenz would be forced to decorate their houses for Corpus Christi, or that the same request was made of Evangelical citizens in Kolmar on the occasion of the visit of Archbishop Dalbor.

A ray of light in the attitude of the Polish authorities towards the Church is furnished by the attitude of the Courts. However much the Germans, in particular the German press, have cause to complain as to the arbitrary judgments of Polish Courts, one must nevertheless acknowledge that in a considerable number of cases of disputes between Polish authorities and Protestant Church quarters, the judges gave their decisions not according to the alleged interests of the State, but according to simple justice. We have already had occasion in the foregoing pages to point out such judgments, in which the plaintiff or defendant Church interests were accorded their rights. They were of frequent occurrence: when Superintendent Rhode of Posen was accused by an officious State Attorney of an unjustifiable assumption of authority, because he had continued to use the title "Superintendent" after his transfer from Schildberg to Posen, he was acquitted. Another procedure of the same State Attorney, who had first begun suit against the *Posener Tageblatt* because of a certain article which had reported the dedication of memorial tablets for the fallen in the Christus Church in Posen, and who had then attempted to extend the action to the organizers of and participants in the celebration, also came to nought.

At the same time, this rule is not without its regrettable exceptions. We must not forget a judgment against Frau Pfarrer Heyse of Gnesen, who was sentenced on April 21, 1921 to eight days' imprisonment, because she had described the dire need of the schools in a private letter to relations in America and had begged for assistance. The State Attorney had declared: "She must be made to feel the punishment and it is therefore no case for a fine."

On November 9, 1922, Vicar Schwerdtfeger of Rosenau, the editor of the Evangelical Parish Journal, was sentenced to a fine of one hundred thousand marks because he had published a description of the Posen National Synod from the *Deutsche Rundschau*, in which a truthful account had been given of various outrages perpetrated by the Polish authorities against Church property. The verdict was based upon "contempt of Polish ordinances and because of anti-Polish sentiment."

On August 9, 1920, Pastor Wiele of Adelnau was sentenced by a penal order to pay a fine of one thousand marks for having evinced anti-Polish sentiments; the punishable act consisted in his having condemned Wilson in a sermon and declared the frontier created by the Versailles Peace to be unjust. The Provincial Court reduced the punishment to 500 marks.

Two clergymen, Vicar Natter of Zempelburg and Vicar Wodaegé of Vandsburg, were each sentenced to two weeks' imprisonment in the notorious Konitz Judgment of November 5, 1923, in which the chief defendant was sentenced to four and a half years hard labour for espionage. The case was made the most of by the whole body of Polish public opinion as a proof of the disloyal activities of the *Deutschtumsbund*. The entire judgment was, however, suspended by the Upper Court in Warsaw on May 9, 1924, and the case transferred to the District Court in Thorn. Up to now these new proceedings have never been held.

A singular contrast to the rigorousness with which the Polish State Attorney and often enough the Court itself is apt to proceed when it is a question of alleged offences committed by Germans, is the lenience with which the overt offences committed by the Polish inhabitants are proceeded against. A particularly crass example is the judgment passed upon the raid of Heinrichsdorf near Soldau, where especial damage was suffered by Vicar Skierlo:

On the night of March 3, 1921, the village of Heinrichsdorf in the district of Soldau was the scene of a raid upon the German inhabitants, a raid which had been organized in every detail.

Rumours of the project leaked out beforehand, but no one thought it possible that such a thing could occur in a well-ordered state in time of peace. A pitch-dark night and pouring rain were propitious to the raid. At eleven o'clock at night several shots were heard in the village, a signal at which the robber band of 40 to 50 men assembled at or inside the schoolhouse. From this point the marauding expedition through the village began. At one point heavy stones were thrown through the windows, at another the windows broken with blows from sticks, at another rifle-shots were fired through the windows into the rooms. The terrified inhabitants were afraid to leave their houses. The night watchman was seized and locked up in the fire-station, his rifle taken from him. When the band reached an inn, they demanded admittance, mentioning a name familiar to the host. As the door was not opened, all the windows facing the street, about forty panes, were broken, and the shop was full in a moment. Everything to drink or to smoke which they found was packed in sacks and in the curtains torn from the windows by the intruders. A sack of sugar, which was awaiting distribution to the inhabitants, was strewn upon the floor. On top of this, bottles, glasses and other goods were thrown, so that in ten minutes the shop was a heap of ruins.

Another inn lay not far off. The proprietor had just taken farewell of a belated guest, and hearing a knocking, opened the door at once, without hesitation. He was at once struck down, and a frightful scene ensued. Before the eyes of his shrieking wife and children, the unfortunate man was mercilessly belaboured, until his blood spurted in a thick stream against the stove. The robbers then stole all the ready cash, provided themselves with cigars, cigarettes, brandy, etc. and proceeded on their way. The last raid was made upon the Evangelical Vicar Skierlo. The front door was forced in, windows and casements, broken were. At the last minute the Vicar, whose windows had already been broken three days previously, and who had been threatened with death, was able to fling on a few clothes and spring out of the window into the darkness of night. When he returned accompanied by several men armed with spades, pitchforks and sticks, the house was empty. In the meantime the bedroom door had been broken open, the men had fallen upon the vicar's wife, who was in bed, and tried to force her with levelled revolvers to tell them where the "pope" was. They would undoubtedly have proceeded to violence, if one of the party had not sympathised with the helpless woman and her young children and called the others off. Since the "pope" was not to be found, they contented themselves with seizing everything they could lay hands on in the way of clothes, coats, furs, silver, clocks, table-covers and bedclothes. They then cried: "Get out, you dogs, to Brandenburg, we will come again in three

days", whereupon they vanished. Outside they discharged their firearms and departed, singing "Poland is not yet lost."

One of the police officials was away on duty, the other did not arrive until the attack was over. Next day large numbers of the inhabitants of this village went in a body to the office of the Starost, where in answer to their complaints they received the heartless reply that they had only themselves to blame. In response to a number of protests from various quarters, more police were sent to this district and investigations were begun. Most of the marauders were identified, but they were allowed to go scot-free, and remained in possession of the stolen goods.

The court proceedings took place in December 1921 in Strassburg. About forty accused persons filled the hall, among whom were young fellows of twenty, but also forty-year old farmers with their sons. The proceedings lasted two days. None of the accused were able to deny their complicity, and the verdict given was — "Acquitted!" The reason given for this verdict of acquittal was that this was a case of justifiable revenge for German misdemeanours against Poles, supposed to have been committed in East Prussia!!

The result of this judgment was that on the way home the acquitted wanted once more to break the windows of the Vicar of Heinrichsdorf, but the police drove them off.

This brings us to the final section of this chapter, the behaviour of the *Polish population* towards the Evangelical Church and its representatives. It is not remarkable that this attitude should be extremely antagonistic and full of hate and malice, when we consider that a great part of the Polish press in Posen and Pommerellia devotes itself in the main to fomenting in the most unscrupulous fashion the feelings of the Polish population against everything German. As the Polish masses are highly credulous and lacking in all judgment, the end in view was easy to achieve.

The antagonistic attitude of the Polish-Catholic population was directed in the main against the pastors. In the year 1920 a Posen clergyman wrote as follows: "One is scarcely outside the house before the boys begin to shout obscenities after one. Official proceedings are disturbed by loud interruptions. The moment I allow myself to be seen in my garden I am met by threatening looks. These young Poles regard my garden as their especial property. Every tree is plundered, and my family threatened with knives and stones. In the course of my journeys to my second parish I am sometimes prevented by scattered bands from proceeding further. Recently five young fellows with long staves held me up and began

to beat the horses. The services are spied upon, so that at any moment one is liable to be brought up before a court martial. It is an everyday matter that one should be spat upon in the street, and the house searched from time to time." Vicar Wiele of Adelnau relates of his auxiliary journeys to Skalmierschütz that he could no longer venture to drive through the town, for he was always molested by the young Poles, who followed him even to the door of the church. Finally the police restored order and begged him to drive through the town again, and not to drive to the church by roundabout ways as he had been doing for some time.

None of these are isolated instances. I could myself tell tales of broken windows and threats made upon the public street; I also had to flee from stone-throwing Polish youngsters and had to call in the help of the police to protect Evangelical funerals. Almost every pastor in villages or in small towns has had similar experiences.

The property of the church is also frequently delivered over to the fanaticism of the masses without any protection. Broken church-windows are an everyday matter.

While the congregation in Thorn was celebrating its 100th anniversary, on October 31, 1924, the noise of the market penetrated through the broken windows and disturbed the solemnity of the festival. On Whitsunday the large window over the altar of the Christus Church in Bromberg was badly damaged by numerous stones after 170 Zloty had been expended on repairs shortly before. A "Luther Oak" was planted in Rawitsch in 1917 to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the Reformation. Up to 1922 it had been torn up three times. In Plywaczewo, the eyes were punched out of a picture of Luther which hung in the Evangelical school. In Sakrau near Graudenz, the chairman of the parish council flung the picture of Luther which had hung in the Evangelical School, into the fire with his own hands.

This fanaticism did not even halt before the resting-places of the dead. Herr Lange, landowner in Schönbrod in the parish of Briesen, inserted an advertisement in the *Deutsche Rundschau*, announcing that his family grave, the last remaining monument in the church-yard, had been demolished, and offering a reward for the discovery of the perpetrators.

The churchyard of Kalinken, which lies close to the river Vistula near Culm, presents a particularly melancholy spectacle. Previous to the war the cemetery was fenced in and was worthy to be the burying-place of civilized people. Nowadays, when a visitor to this part of town approaches the churchyard, he receives an unpleasant shock. The fence has wholly disappeared, and has no doubt been stolen piece by piece. A much-trodden path leads right over the last resting-places of the dead. Heavy and valuable monuments have been toppled over and damaged. Bits have been broken off the railings surrounding the graves, and doors removed, marble tombstones lie scattered about. Under such conditions it is only natural that most of the graves are neglected and that many have been trodden out of existence.

In Trlong, in the parish of Altraden, all the monuments have been shattered, the railings surrounding the graves broken to pieces, the foundations stolen and used for building purposes, the trees cut down. Monuments have been destroyed in Gnesen, Charlottenhof and Duschnik.

Several trees were stolen in Deutsch-Popen near Schmiegel; three of the pillars supporting the wall were thrown to the ground, all the glass plates on the tombstones broken, and divers marble tombstones and other monuments were damaged.

In Nakel metal coffins were disinterred and stolen.

In Miloslav the churchyard fence is gradually disappearing and the glass has been cut out of the memorial tablets.

In Schrimm 16 trees were stolen from the churchyard. Here the perpetrators were identified and severely punished; the Catholic clergyman condemned the blasphemous act in strong terms.

In Schwedenhöhe there is a cemetery belonging to the municipality of Bromberg which is divided according to religions. The monuments on the Protestant side have either been stolen or almost entirely destroyed. The same thing has occurred in the Municipal Cemetery of Beelitz, a former suburb of Bromberg. In the Evangelical section of the cemetery in Klein-Bartelssee, which also belongs to the town of

Bromberg, some of the trees have been hewn down, it is alleged, by permission of the Bromberg magistracy.

In Hopfengarten numerous gravestones have been shattered, in Labischin the solid pillars of masonry supporting the fence have been torn down.

In Lochovo thirty gravestones have been destroyed, in the Evangelical forest churchyard in Wtelno almost all the monuments have been shattered and the coffins reposing in a mausoleum forced open. The perpetrators escaped with mild punishments imposed by the police. In Lubin one Sunday a party of farm-labourers made targets of the monuments and crosses while Divine Service was proceeding. The wooden crosses were used for firewood in winter. In Luszko the churchyard trees have been hewn down, the cattle graze among the graves and most of the monuments and tombstones have been demolished. In Krieven the windows of the mortuary have been broken, the wooden crosses from the graves used as firewood, the memorial tablets destroyed, the graves trodden down and the Churchyard wall twice broken through by some unknown hand. In Margonin the crosses on the graves have been pulled down and the gravestones destroyed.

It would probably be easy enough to extend this depressing list. But would such fanatical outbreaks have become possible, if the Polish press had not unscrupulously fomented hatred against German-Evangelical fellow-citizens?

But this fanaticism goes still further. It stretches forth its hands to grasp the Evangelical churches, — just as formerly in the days of the Counter-Reformation. Here, too, the Polish Press is pulling the strings. In the *Kuryer Warszawski* of Juni 15, 1924, Kierski, the notorious former State Attorney directed an open demand to the Polish State to convert the unnecessary "*Kirchys ewangelickie*", into Catholic churches, accompanying the demand with a statement that at least half the Evangelical churches were superfluous.¹

¹. It would be contrary to the dignity of the Catholic Church to give the name of "*kościół*" to an Evangelical church, neither would it be willing to allow a Superintendent-General to be entitled "*biskup*" or a Pastor "*ksiądz*" or "*proboszcz*".

Since the State, for palpable reasons, hesitates to resort to such measures, the Polish population has taken matters into its own hands. On May 18, 1924, after the May Service in the Evangelical church of Netztal near Bromberg, about 200 Poles took forcible possession of the church. The Polish flag was hoisted upon the steeple. The Polish clergyman, however, refused to use the church for religious services, and the responsible Starost with the assistance of the police restored the church to its rightful owners. The *Gazeta Bydgoska*, however, defended the robbers. It spread the report that the congregation numbered only 260 souls, and that the vicar was in Germany. In reality the congregation still numbered 1200 souls and the clergyman was merely on his vacation. The report went on: "The Catholic population took over this church without any exercise of force and without creating any kind of disturbance." Some Germans belonging to the *Hakenkreuz* group had reported to the *Deutschtumsbund* and received word that they should make forcible complaint to the administrative officials. The procedure of the Starost is stigmatized as tactless, arising out of a fallacious conception of the situation and only to be remedied by an action of the central authorities, which should take the church from the Germans. As a final touch, threatening allusion is made to the nervous feeling among the populace.

The Catholic clergy do not always show such a loyal spirit as must be conceded to them in the Netztal case. In Zabikovo a big Polish meeting took place on the Third Sunday in Advent, 1921. The speaker, a Catholic vicar, demanded that the Evangelical church, alleged to have been built by the Prussian Government, be surrendered to the Catholic parish. The competent Provost, to be sure, was also opposed to the plan in this instance. In Gross Koschlau near Soldau the local squire and the Catholic Father came to the administrator of the parish to enquire if he would let them the church. The Evangelical congregation refused unanimously to hear of the idea, whereupon a Pole was heard to observe: "We shall not stay long to parley, one of these days we will take it by storm." The forcible seizure of the Evangelical church in

Loebau would no doubt have occurred in 1921, just as it occurred in 1924 in Netzthal, if the Evangelical congregation had not heard of the project in time and taken measures accordingly. In 1923 five members of the Thorn Magistracy, which has the right of patronage over the church of Gramtschen, appeared in that place, demanded the keys and inspected both churches. At the same time they declared that one of the two churches was to be handed over to the Catholics. It should be noted that the old church has been Protestant ever since 1560 and is now used as a Confirmation hall and as a Morgue. The other church was built in the year 1910 from the funds of the Gustav Adolf Society, the Prussian Government and the parish. The Magistracy did not contribute the legal patronal amount to the building funds, but merely a voluntary contribution of 17 000 marks. This procedure on the part of the holders of the living discloses a peculiar conception of the duties of a patron, which surely include the protection of the parish property. The church of Leibitsch, which belongs to the parish of Gramtschen, is coveted by the Catholic parish.

In 1923, a meeting of railway-workers which was presided over by the chief of the traffic manager's office at Ostrovo, took place at New Skalmierschütz. The surrender of the church to the Catholics was demanded on the plea that at the time the Evangelical church was built, the Railway had contributed funds from its exchequer. There were alleged to be only thirteen members of the Evangelical congregation, who would be glad to have the church off their hands, whereas the Catholics needed the church, in order to save the long walk to church which was necessary at present. As a matter of fact the church is only one and a half kilometres off, the Evangelical congregation embraces not 13, but 60 to 70 souls, a pastor from Ostrovo holds Evangelical services once a fortnight, and the congregation has unanimously declined to sell the church or the vicarage.

It must be especially emphasized that even at the time when the Prussian Settlement Commission was at the height of its activity, no one ever thought of laying a finger upon Catholic church buildings. Indeed, in many parishes, the



Boy's Preparatory School for Confirmation Candidates.

owners of property abutting on the empty Catholic church, undertook the care of the church.

It is to be hoped that the chief Polish authorities will continue to maintain a firm stand against all desires and demands of the population and the Catholic church. Unfortunately the attitude of the Polish authorities in East Poland, where many Greek-Catholic churches have been converted into Roman Catholic churches, and the yielding attitude assumed towards the fanatical press and population of the West Mark, does not leave much room for hope.

The United Evangelical Church is as a whole thus placed in a most unfortunate position in consequence of its unregulated relations with the Polish State, though it is in no wise to blame for these. *The church is deprived of all legal redress* and is delivered up to the arbitrary measures of higher and subordinate officials and to the violent fanaticism of the Polish population. This, however, is not to be wondered at in view of the fact that a Polish Prime Minister himself openly proclaimed (comp. page 25) as a fundamental principle of his policy towards the church, such a sentiment as:

"It is always the same story, might is right!"

4. *The Expulsion of Clergymen.*

On February 7, 1922, a deputy named Breiski and thirty other deputies belonging to the Vitos Party, put the following urgent motion to the Seim:

"The Seim demands of the Government

(1) That positions in church and school should be accorded only to Polish citizens who speak the Polish language fluently and without error.

(2) That at least six hours a week of instruction in the Polish language should be made obligatory in all public and private schools, and that this instruction be given only by persons competent to deliver lessons in the Polish language.

(3) That all clergy and teachers who do not possess *Polish citizenship*, who do not command the Polish language or who act contrary to the interests of the Polish state, should be *expelled*."

In justification of this motion it was stated that the most obstinate fighters for Germanization, and at the same time enemies of everything Polish during the era of the Prussian domination had been the German Evangelical clergy and teachers. Many of these men were still in office, although they often were not Polish citizens and were ignorant of the Polish language, indeed a man of German nationality was at the head of the Church "who saw to it that the Polish language should not find its way into the Evangelical churches."

The fate of this motion in the Seim is unknown. There is no doubt that the majority of the Seim would like to have agreed to it, but apparently the members were clever enough to let it drop. But it would be highly incorrect to deduce that it had no effect. Or could it have been coincidence that the expulsions of clergymen began just at this time and though gradually increasing, were confined at first almost entirely to the territory of the Voivode of Pommerellia, the head of which at the time was the Voivode Breiski, a brother of the aforementioned Deputy Breiski? The expulsion of the clergy may actually be regarded as the personal work of this Voivode. He thus attempted to translate into deeds the thoughts contained in the motion quoted above.

The first expulsion had already taken place before this motion was put before the Seim. The editor of this pamphlet, at that time vicar of Schoensee, District of Briesen, was the victim.

On August 6, 1921, the Consistorium in Posen received a communication from the Ministry to the effect that "after a careful examination into the activities of Pastor Ludolf Müller it was decided to expel him as an undesirable alien." No more definite reasons were given. Upon the German Government inquiring of the Polish Government as to these reasons, the Polish Government replied that it did not see the necessity of giving reasons, it was sufficient that it considered Müller to be an undesirable alien. Pastor Müller himself declares: "When the Posen Consistorium in the course of a protest against the expulsion, hinted that the expulsion was doubtless due to personal differences between myself and the Starost, the Ministry returned the answer that in a free state such as the Republic of Poland, personal affairs could not be the cause of measures of state. This answer was read with a knowing grin by everyone who knew what Polish freedom really means. The real reason of my expulsion, apart from the

many differences with Polish officials which are described above, was the work I was doing to stem the tide of emigration among the German-Evangelical settlers, in other words, my *work to preserve our Evangelical congregations*. Since all efforts to secure a remission of the expulsion were fruitless, I left Poland on November 4, 1921. It must be acknowledged that in the case of my expulsion it was still considered necessary to inform the clerical authorities of the expulsion order several weeks before I received it, "in order to give them the possibility of finding a substitute, and in order to render it easier for Pastor Müller to hand over his office as a shepherd of souls to his successor in a proper and fitting manner." At that time it was at any rate recognized that the expulsion of a clergyman signified a considerable interference with church life and that the severities connected with it must be assuaged as far as possible. Later this was no longer held to be necessary, at any rate in Pommerellia.

A former Missionary named Juknat, who took over the management of the living of Lissevo near Culm in January 1921, received the expulsion order almost at the same time. He had not noticed that his leave to enter the country was available only for four weeks. The answer to the Consistory's request for a lengthening of the pass visé came in the form of the expulsion order, which was extended to April 1, 1922 on account of the illness of the missionary's wife. The real reason was the Bible classes which he conducted, which were regarded by the Polish officials as secret meetings of a political nature.

On November 11, 1922, Pastor Engelbrecht of Dirschau, the representative of the Superintendent, received orders to leave Poland with his family by November 14, 1922. The period of grace was extended to November 25. According to the order, the expulsion was intended as "a retaliatory measure for the expulsion of the Polish citizen Felix Keplin and his family from East Prussia." It was later established that this Pole, alleged to have been expelled from Germany, had in reality left the country without any expulsion order six months previously. Other reasons were then sought for, such as political activity and the circumvention of rules in the matter of passes. It was then explained to the German embassy in Warsaw that Engelbrecht was a person in the highest degree inconvenient and even dangerous to Poland; he

had long been one of the first names on a list of ten Germans whom it was proposed to expel upon the first favourable opportunity!

The same plan was followed again and again: As soon as the reasons at first advanced for the expulsion order by the Polish Government had been shown to be without foundation, other reasons were invented, and these of such a general nature that a proper defence against them was impossible. The utterances of the Polish Government already betray a tendency to use as constant argument the contention that there could be no question of severe damage being caused to church life by the expulsions, since the number of clergymen in relation to the number of believers was still three times as high in Pommerellia as in East Prussia. The fact that the number of clergymen required in a district depends not so much upon the number of souls as upon the size of the territory over which they are distributed, was intentionally ignored.

On January 17, 1923, Pastor Haack of Krokow was expelled. "Your conduct up to the present as a national of a foreign country in Poland proves that you are a most undesirable person for the Polish State. We cannot permit that you should continue to enjoy the hospitality of the Polish state, which you have hitherto abused." He was especially reproached for having acted as Chairman of a local branch of the *Deutschtumsbund*, — "because this organisation has given the Polish officials cause to take certain measures both legal and administrative." It is a fact that the Polish Government later proscribed the *Deutschtumsbund* as being an illegal organisation, but is also a fact that to this day it has not been able to show the slightest proof of any illegal activities of this society. The Rev. Haack was, moreover, only chairman of a local group as long as he believed himself to be a Polish citizen. As soon as he discovered that this was not the case, he gave up the position, long before the arrival of the decree of expulsion.

The cases mentioned up to now, however, form only a prologue to the *mass expulsions* of April, 1923.

The clergymen Schroeter (Kensau), Erich Engelbrecht (Groß Leistenau), Heck (Waldau), Melhorn (Thorn), (Manager of the Superintendency) Lechner (Neumark), Freyer (Schmentau), Schoewe (Mockrau), Ballke (Stendsitz), Dehmlow (Rentschkau), Heldt (Narzým), Schröder (Friedrichsbruch), Mundt (Deaconesses' Home, Vandsburg), Anuschek (Gurske) all received an identical communication from the Voivode's office in the latter half of April, 1923. The names of twelve Polish nationals who had recently been expelled from Germany were mentioned in this document. The communication closed with the words: "Therefore, as a measure of retaliation, I expel you from Polish territory."

The expulsion of Anuschek, who was able to prove his Polish nationality, was cancelled, as was also that of Mundt. All the others were obliged to leave Poland, although the German government at once established the following facts: The expulsion of the twelve Polish citizens mentioned in the expulsion communication was in fact contemplated, because they were not only unemployed and destitute, but, except in one instance, also homeless and did not possess the required papers. Eight in the meantime found work, so that the expulsion order was not carried into effect; four were actually expelled, because they had smuggled themselves over the German frontier without a permit. The Polish Government thereupon extended the scope of its reproaches against the German Government and cited 132 cases of inadmissible expulsion of Poles. Only a few weeks later the German Government was able to announce that 108 cases had been investigated. Of these 38 persons had been expelled for vagrancy, 57 on account of pass irregularities and the like, 2 on account of unemployment, 11 on account of criminal offences.

In retaliation for Polish *vagrants* and *criminals*, turned out of Germany according to old international custom, honest German citizens whose industry and capability could only have been advantageous to the Polish State, were turned out of their homes, and a great number of Evangelical clergy were forced to leave their parishes and the country! These men had been careful to refrain from all political activities and had

served their parishes truly and faithfully in sermons, instruction and the care of souls.

Of course it was not long before a "justification" was found. The Polish press indicated the way. On May 18, the *Słowo Pomorski* of Thorn, published an article under the title "Unbidden Guests." It was not mere chance, this article declared, that a great number of the Evangelical clergy in Posen and Pommerellia should be German citizens. The clergy who were well-disposed towards Poland had been summoned back to Germany. Those who had remained at their posts were in the main obstinate "*Hakatists*" whose anti-Polish sentiments were well-known. "Tools in the hands of factors who abide beyond the frontiers of the Polish empire, they employ their pulpits, the platforms at their assemblies and the columns of the German newspapers in order to oppress and suppress Polish feeling . . . In a word: they are pests, whom no country that holds its honour dear, would suffer to remain within its boundaries." The expulsion of the aforesaid twelve "must represent the beginning of the aforesaid movement which will free us from all such unbidden guests."

In its issue of May 29, the *Dziennik Gdanski* of Danzig even went so far as to enumerate the political crimes of each expelled clergyman:

- (1) "Melhorn: Issued advice against emigration.
- (2) Schroeter: Agitator, dangerous to the State, in secret communication with German agitators, whose orders he faithfully carried out in his district.
- (3) Lechner: Provoked the feelings of the German population against the local Polish population.
- (4) Heck: Kept up secret communication with German agitators abroad.
- (5) Schoewe: A secret factotum of the *Deutschtumsbund* and an anti-Polish agitator.
- (6) Schröder: Agitator of the *Deutschtumsbund*.
- (7) Freyer: An obstinately "Hakatistik" German; irreconcilable enemy of everything Polish.
- (8) Heidt: A well-known "Hakatist", an embittered enemy of Poland, had the bells rung at the entry of the Bolsheviks in the year 1920, for which he was interned; he refused to instruct a Masurian confirmation class in the Polish language. His wife takes part in the "Hakatist" German Women's Club.

(9) Mundt: An anti-Polish agitator, an enemy of the State; the German clergy from all over the country hold secret meetings at his house.

(10) Dehmlow: A "Hakatist", an agitator, an enemy of the State.

(11) Ballke: Spread Germanism in Polish Kaschubia; an anti-Polish agitator among the Kaschubes.

(12) Erich Engelbrecht: Son of a vicar of Dirschau who was expelled from Poland on account of actions hostile to the State — actions which were proved against him. He himself in his capacity as a clergyman was a pillar of active Germanization in the district of Graudenz and an agitator against the State."

Even without knowledge of the real state of things it is easy to see from the general nature of these accusations that they are pure inventions. When the persons and conditions are familiar, it is a question whether this unscrupulous and lying agitation should be met with indignation or put aside with scornful amusement. For example, Pastor Mundt, of the Vandsburg House of Deaconesses, well-known as the centre of congregational work, finds the congregational meetings which took place there counted against him as secret political meetings, and at a time when everything German was melting away like snow in the sun and losing every day in numbers and in influence, this accusatory record ventures to speak of a "active Germanization" in Poland!

It is regrettable that the highest Polish officials approved the expulsion of the clergy, using the same unfounded justification. The German delegates to the Seim prepared an interpellation, to which they received the following answer from the Minister:

"The aforementioned Evangelical clergy are well-known to the Polish officials on account of their hostile activities, especially for the way they have encouraged the spread of Separatism and hate of everything Polish among the native Polish citizens of German nationality."

On June 16, 1923, Vicar Wolter of Loebau was expelled. He was one of four natives of Danzig who were driven out of the country by the Polish government as a measure of reprisal against Danzig. When Wolter arrived in Danzig (he was taken over the frontier accompanied by a police-officer)

it was discovered that he was not a native of Danzig, but a German national. Although the expulsion was founded upon an actual error, he was not allowed to return to his parish.

On April 14, 1924, Vicar Wiebe (Briesen) was also expelled as being a citizen of Danzig. No reason was given. It is supposed to have been due to the refusal of the Parish Church Council to rent the second vicarage, which was standing empty, to a Polish advocate, nephew of Dr. Szczepanski, the Starost, and son-in-law of Dr. Kubacz, the Polish leader.

The President of the Danzig Senate made a personal complaint about this expulsion at the meeting of the League of Nations in Geneva in October, 1924, saying that Poland had no right to expel citizens of Danzig. This protest was not, however, recognized.

The last expulsion befell Preacher Wiemer, who was active in the parish of Herrenhut, Gross Reichenau.

All the expulsions already mentioned took place in Pommerellia and may as indicated be regarded more or less as the personal work of Voivode Breiski. Since this man was obliged to resign his office, there have been no more expulsions.

Only two expulsions of clergy have taken place in the Province of Posen. The first German expelled was Missionary Kasten, acting-vicar of Altkloster, District of Wollstein.

Kasten had only a temporary permit to reside in the country, and this had to be renewed from time to time by the District Commissioner. When request for renewal was made on Sept. 1. 1923, the Commissioner refused to extend the permit. The reason given was that Kasten had demanded of Polish children in the street that they should greet him in German. This was, of course, untrue. Kasten now turned to the Starost of Wollstein. This man did not cancel the injunction of the District Commissioner "although he could have done so", "in order not to dampen the man's zeal in office, and in order not to create the impression that he was pro-German." Kasten then turned to the Voivode and received from him temporary permission to remain. When he returned from Posen on September 5th, he found the vicarage empty. The day before the District Commissioner had caused his sick

wife to be forcibly taken from her bed, dressed by several women, put in a carriage and driven to the German frontier. At the frontier she was placed in the ditch and was obliged to remain there for six hours!! This was all done in spite of the fact that the Starost had expressly assured Kasten before his departure for Posen that nothing would happen to his wife during his absence! Although Kasten handed the letter of the Voivode with the permit to remain to the District Commissioner, he was also transported to the frontier. Later the Commissioner denied ever having received the papers, although this was obviously highly improbable.

Kasten was for a time allowed to return to his parish, but was finally expelled on October 22, since he was supposed to have behaved to the Polish officials in a manner which was not considered loyal. Here again it was plain that even highly-placed Polish officials consider that they must support the unjustifiable measures of minor officials on principle, when these were directed against Germans and persons belonging to the Evangelical faith. In all probability the real reason for this expulsion is to be sought in the fact that the District Commissioner was about to be married and wished to secure the vicarage to live in.

Vicar Püsching (Deutschdorf) received an expulsion order on November 30, 1923. He had come into conflict with a female teacher, on account of the inadequate religious instruction which she had imparted. The Polish authorities imagined that the cause of the trouble was to be found wholly in the fact that the female teacher was of Polish nationality, and without hearing what Püsching had to say, issued the expulsion order. Püsching, who believed that the order would be cancelled after the way the negotiations were taking shape, remained in Deutschdorf after the period set for his departure. During the night of April 15, 1924, he was dragged from his bed by the police, put into a farm wagon and transported in the same night to the frontier which lay about fifty kilometres off. As a consequence of the privations endured in this night ride,

the Vicar, who is an elderly man, was confined to his bed for a long time.

It may be granted that Vicar Püsching had put himself in the wrong by overstaying his time, but surely this purely formal matter is no excuse for such physical and psychical brutality.

Two occurrences of a later date showed that the Expulsion Policy will go on in an aggravated form. The former Town-President of Posen, Rataiski, became Minister of Home Affairs on November 17, 1924.

In his first public utterance as to his future policy, he spoke definitely of his standpoint with regard to the United Evangelical Church, and used the following words to a representative of the *Dziennik Poznański*. "There cannot be two opinions about this matter. The Protestant Church in general and the United Evangelical Church in particular is not the Catholic Church, which possesses a central organization and a leading power in common for all its believers. There is therefore no reason whatever to permit the United Evangelical Church in Polish territory to be dependent upon Prussian officials (the Supreme Church Council in Berlin). It is also not to be thought of foreign, non-Polish nationals should be members of the Evangelical Consistory or should occupy any other position."

Words were immediately followed by actions. Only a few days after Rataiski had entered upon his official duties, Pastor Bertheau in Wollstein and Pastor Löffler in Rackwitz received orders of expulsion. No reasons were cited; they were "undesirable aliens" and were to leave Poland by December 7. To be sure the period of grace was then extended. According to utterances made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Warsaw to the official German representative, it seemed for a time as if the order of expulsion would be cancelled. But on February 15, 1925, both men were compelled to leave Poland. The *Kurier Poznański* could find nothing worse to say than that one of them was chairman of the Y. W. C. A. and that his wife conducted the Evangelical Women's Aid Society.



The Paulinum at Posen (front view).

A new kind of expulsion order was put into force against Vicar Roman (Groß-Neudorf) at the beginning of March, 1925. He had undertaken a journey to Germany. When he was ready to return and applied for a visé, this was refused. His family received an order to leave Poland by March 20 at latest.

A recent order issued by the Voivode of Posen gives occasion for new fears. This ordains that foreigners may live within the rayon of the fortress of Posen or within a frontier zone extending for thirty kilometres, only with a special permit from the Starost. The fate of three members of the Evangelical Consistory and of twenty-two Evangelical clergymen is thus placed in the hands of men who are all more or less supporters of a policy of de-Germanization.

All these expulsions are beginning to be a serious matter for our Evangelical Church. *It is now seriously threatened by a growing deficiency in clergy.* At a first glance, it appears that there must be a superfluity of Evangelical clergy in the surrendered Eastern Provinces. If the urban parishes have lost 80 percent or more of their members, and the rural parishes at least 60 percent, whereas the number of clergy has been diminished only about 40 percent, then the conclusion drawn by the Polish Government that the United Evangelical Church still has far too many clergymen does not seem unreasonable. It may be acknowledged at once that in the towns there were far more clergy than were absolutely necessary. Thorn had seven clergymen before the war. Now the whole work is done by two men, and the life of the parish suffers in no way. It was natural that many secondary pastorates could be withdrawn in the smaller towns. It was also perfectly possible to withdraw many country livings. But here a limit of what was possible was soon reached. In Posen and West Prussia even before the war there were always, in addition to firmly-established, closed parishes, a large number of parishes of distinct diaspora character, often consisting of only a few souls, but spread over wide areas. How could these parishes be combined, where could vicars find time and strength to satisfy the needs of

such widespread combined parishes? The difficulties are increased by the fact that the lack of schools is particularly felt in such parishes and therefore various duties demanding much expenditure of time fall upon the pastor's shoulders. Yet the step was taken, a number of really necessary livings in country districts were withdrawn, because it was no longer possible, chiefly for financial reasons, to maintain them.

Nevertheless there was never for a moment a real excess of clergy, because the natural course of things regulated the number automatically. Since 1919, twenty-five pastors have died within the territories of the United Evangelical Church, and thirty have been pensioned off.

In addition to this there is the voluntary emigration of pastors. This has never played any considerable part. When a German paper in Bromberg published in October 1921, a sharp criticism of the emigration of Evangelical pastors, I was able to prove that according to statistics, there was no walk in life represented among the German inhabitants of Poland, which in such difficult circumstances had stuck to its post with anything approaching the loyal tenacity manifested by the Evangelical clergy. Up to that time 17 clergymen had left Pommerellia, while more than a hundred remained in office. In Posen the number was somewhat higher, in proportion to the far greater number of clergy. In the course of years, however, the number of clergymen who have emigrated, has increased sufficiently to form a factor which must be taken into consideration. It amounts to about one hundred, that is to say, twenty-five percent.

The *determining factor* in most cases was the question of the *education of the clergymans' children*. The pressing need of schools has already been referred to. The clergy were no less worried by this question than the other sections of the German population, in fact perhaps more, for the tradition prevailing among German vicars that the children should enjoy a first-class education, is one that dies hard, and was certainly alive among the Posen clergy. But where were the children to obtain their education? In many parishes even a German Evangelical village school does not exist. Most of the clergy have no time to educate their children themselves. Moreover if the vicar be a German subject,

the Polish Government forbids him to attempt any such thing. The only high-schools available for German children are private institutions, and a classical education is only possible in the city of Posen itself.

If the children are sent to school in Germany, then there is endless trouble with the passports; sometimes the permit to leave cannot be obtained, another time the permit to return. Even this might all be borne, were not the economic situation such that it is almost impossible for the pastors to send their children to foreign schools. It is a well-known fact that the so-called "inflation period" began much sooner in Poland than in Germany and lasted longer. And even though it did not take on such grotesque forms as in Germany, yet its long duration put a heavy economic strain upon the clergy, especially as the increase in prices, except for certain food-stuffs, is much greater in Poland than in Germany. Is it not in accordance with human nature that under these circumstances clergymen with particularly large families should seize every opportunity to be transferred to a German living, or that elderly clergymen should request to be pensioned off, rather than undergo the hardships of a diaspora-living?

Whatever one may think of the facts, there is no denying that since 1919 upwards of 100 clergymen have left Poland more or less of their own accord.

This would not be of so much consequence, were it possible to provide substitutes as in former days. But the question of *providing an adequate theological succession* is one of the most serious anxieties that beset the Church. The Report submitted on this point to the Synod in Posen in the autumn of 1923, which is in the main applicable to the present situation, may be quoted here:

"So far as we can ascertain, there are at the moment 13 students of theology undergoing their University training in our territory. (1925, 11). Six of these, however, are German nationals, and it is by no means certain whether the Polish citizenship of all the others will be recognized. In addition to these there are thirteen candidates (1925, 7) of whom three are preparing for examination, four are in the Preachers' College, one is on trial as locum-tenens and five (1925, 2) are in Germany. Permission to enter and reside in the country was refused to two of these when they were summoned to pass their examinations, because their right to Polish citizenship was in question. The objection was founded upon the well-known Polish reading of Par. 4 of the Minority Agreement¹.

¹ Article 4 of the Minority Agreement runs as follows: "Po-

Renewed attempts to have them recognized according to the Hague decision have hitherto met with no success. A third has been struggling for a considerable period to obtain a similar recognition. It is very doubtful if a fourth will succeed in obtaining it. A fifth who has passed his examinations in Germany and is now serving out his period as locum-tenens, may expect his pastoral call at the end of his probation time. There can be no doubt as to his nationality.

Under the most favourable circumstances, therefore there would be thirteen candidates and eight students, spread over a period of three to four years, at the disposal of the Church. Of these ten would be ready for their posts in the year 1924, three in the year 1925, and two or three of the theological students at present in training every year on an average for the next three years. Under the most favourable circumstances therefore, this would ensure an access of twenty-one theologians by the year 1928. In opposition to this the fact must be emphasized that forty-five of our pastors are over sixty years of age. The retirement of half this number may

land recognizes as Polish citizens by legal right and without further formality persons of German, Austrian, Hungarian or Russian nationality who were born in the said territory of parents residing there, even though at the time of the coming into force of this treaty they may no longer have their residence there." Poland interprets this provision as meaning that only those persons are entitled to claim Polish nationality whose parents were still living in the State of Poland at the time of its rehabilitation. It also refuses to recognize the right to citizenship of those who lived in the territory which had become Polish before January 1, 1908, but interrupted their term of residence on account of their studies, or for similar reasons.

Meanwhile the Vienna Decision of the Belgian Professor Kaeckenbeek on August 30, 1924, has declared the Polish interpretation to be false.

On the other hand, the same Decision, contrary to the plain wording of the Minority Agreement, declares the Polish theory correct which declares that all persons who optioned for Germany not only may but *must* leave the territory of the Polish State.

This must take place, so far as the owners of real estate are concerned, up to November 1, 1925, and in case they live within a certain radius of the fortifications, until August 1, 1925. The hope that Poland would decide to relinquish the right which it had acquired by means of this Decree of Arbitration and give up the expulsion of those who had voted for Germany, was not fulfilled, though for the moment, the whole sale expulsions of *Optanten* have been suspended. The clergy was not immediately affected by these orders of expulsion, inasmuch as the few parsons who had given their option for Germany, had left Poland previous to their issue.

be expected within this period, and so it would seem that the supply would prove equal to the demand, provided that the number of candidates shows no falling-off and *provided that no more German pastors should be expelled.*

But what is to happen in the future? Can the necessary succession be supplied from internal sources alone? Here two serious difficulties must be faced. In the first place, there is no German classical educational institution, on the contrary all the higher schools are devoted to modern subjects and science. Without Greek and a perfect training in Latin, however, it is impossible to study theology. Students who have taken a modern degree must reckon three or four terms' extra study to complete the classical studies beyond what is necessary for a student who has taken a classical degree. Such an extension of the period of academic study is hardly possible to-day, for economic reasons. This economic impoverishment to-day is in general a great hindrance to the taking-up of a learned profession.¹

The question of the training of a theological succession becomes still more difficult, however, if, as might be expected, it should be demanded that a part of the period of study should be spent at a University inside the Polish frontier. At the moment, no such University exists. There is, to be sure, a theological school in Warsaw. According to the latest negotiations regarding the constitution of the Lutheran Church in Congress Poland, it may be expected that a part of the lectures there will be given in the German language. None the less we must refuse to bind ourselves to send our students there. In the first place this University has been brought into being without our co-operation. We cannot in any case allow our theological students to be trained at a University in which we have no influence upon the appointment of the Professors. In addition to this, the lecturers in this University belong to a church which rejects the Union in principle. We cannot place the training of our students, destined to serve the United Evangelical Church¹ in the hands of men who must necessarily, as faithful sons of their church, regard the Union as a variety of Lutherism and the root of all evil. Finally, we must reject at the very beginning any attempt on the part of a governmental office to dictate to us that a part of the course of theological study shall be absolved in Warsaw. The Ministry of War actually published a proclamation to this effect. *We maintain that the Church alone has to decide where its future ministers shall or must study."*

¹ Those classes of officials and settlers from whom the theological student formerly came, have emigrated. Now there is only the vicarage itself to draw from, but the average vicar is frequently not in a position to allow his sons to study.

The natural course of action would be to do away with the difficulties described in this place by the erection of a theological institute. But quite apart from the fact that study at a foreign university has become urgently advisable in view of the prevailing isolation from western culture, there are other difficulties which weigh against the plan of building a university. In proportion to the small number of probable students, the cost would be very high, and it would be scarcely possible to get proper teachers. It is hardly to be expected that the Polish Government would regard German University Professors any more favourably than German pastors. There would be only one way out of the difficulty, the one employed when the theological school in Warsaw was founded, that is, hurriedly to train a few native pastors to serve as professors. But new difficulties at once arise. It is absolutely impossible to create a faculty capable of good work. Instruction must be given in the Polish language. But it is impossible to create a Polish theological literature. There would not be enough readers. There would be only from one to two hundred students and lecturers in question who would read Polish theological books in the Polish language. No publisher would print text-books for such a small body of readers, books which are moreover liable to become out-of-date very rapidly. The Poles would forbid the printing of these books in the German language. The scientific conscience of the Professors would however, never reconcile itself to the use of text-books consisting merely of their own Polish dictation text.

It would be an easier matter to create a theological school in connection with the Preachers' Seminary already in existence. On the one hand this would afford young people coming from a modern school the opportunity of completing their classical education, which could easily be combined with a general introduction to theological study, and on the other hand there would have to be facilities for the completion of these studies. As the Catholic Church in Poland has the right to educate its priests in seminaries, it would scarcely be

possible for the Government to refuse to recognize such a theological school.

Nothing, however, can do away with the preliminary necessity that the major portion of the period of study should be spent in a foreign university. It must be remembered that this question was expressly discussed at the Conference held in Warsaw on March 18 and 19, 1922 between the Polish Government and representatives of the Church (compare page 22 and Appendix page 135), and that it was recognized as being necessary that: "There must be a possibility of training a theological succession in German places of education, and it must be possible to summon spiritual reinforcements from abroad, especially from the Mother Church, without any change of nationality being demanded, and qualifications earned without the boundaries of Poland must be recognized — all this as long as there is no possibility of raising the necessary forces in Poland itself, or of training individuals there who should satisfy all justifiable confessional, scientific and linguistic requirements." The agreement of March 18 and 19, 1922, has led to no results, either in this question, which is absolutely vital to the Evangelical Church in Poland, or in any other point which was agreed upon. No German pastor has received permission to take over a Polish living. On the contrary, numerous pastors have been expelled since this date. Here we must again consider the significance of these expulsions with regard to the position of the Church as a whole.

Taken by itself, the expulsion of twenty-three pastors, however hard upon the clergy themselves and their parishes, could not have much effect upon the position of the Evangelical Church as a whole. When we however, take into consideration the natural losses accruing to the Church by death and the pensioning-off of elderly pastors, the more or less voluntary emigration of numerous ministers and the difficulty of training the theological succession, it becomes plain that the loss of twenty-three pastors by expulsion, most of them perfectly willing to remain in Poland, young and full of energy, must have serious, if not disastrous results.

Statistically speaking, the position at present is as follows: in 405 parishes the number of livings has already been reduced from 416 to 384. It has now become necessary still further to reduce this number to 292. Of these 40 are at the moment unoccupied. Seventy of the pastors are Germans, that is, those who took up their positions later than January 1, 1908; most of these belong to the younger generation, while the pastors of Polish nationality mostly belong to the older generation. Forty pastors are already over sixty years of age:

An example from the province of Posen gives us an insight into individual aspects of the situation. Through the expulsion of pastors Kasten, Bertheau, and Löffler, a peculiar situation arose in the ephorality of Wollstein, namely, that the five neighbouring parishes of Altkloster, Rackwitz, Rotenburg, Teichrode, and Wollstein, with six churches and totalling six thousand souls, dwelling in seventy-six communities and scattered over an area of 900 square kilometres, were forced to obtain their spiritual nourishment from the parish of Rotenburg, lying upon the very periphery of this area. The *Kurier Poznański* declares, it is true, that the Government has made adequate provision for the needs of the parishes. As a matter of fact, the Government has been able to do nothing, if only on account of the lack of pastors.

It does not seem to me too much to say, at the conclusion of this chapter, that *the policy of expulsion pursued by the Polish Government against Evangelical pastors has for its conscious aim the complete destruction of Evangelical Church life.*

5. The Difficulties put in the Way of Evangelical Church Charities by Poland.

The aggressiveness of the oppressor does not call a halt even before the works of Christian charity. Out of the large number of cases we only select two for fuller treatment in this place.

a) The Deaconesses' House in Posen.

The Deaconesses' House in Posen was founded in 1865 as a free Christian work of mercy. It was not the State, but



Pupils of the Paulinum.

the sacrificial spirit of the Evangelical parishes which raised the funds to build and extend this institution. Before the war it was rebuilt on the outskirts of the town — an imposing house for the Sisters, a hospital with three hundred beds and absolutely modern fittings and a number of supernumerary offices constitute the Institute in its new form. At the beginning of 1922 there were 357 sisters, and Posen sisters were at work at 151 stations. Of these 16 were in Germany, 1 in South America and the remaining 134 in Polish territory. The most important work is parish nursing (93 stations) which is particularly important in Poland on account of the scarcity of physicians. In addition to this 24 Kindergarten schools and six other institutions for children were in charge of Posen sisters of charity and they were also at work in 17 hospitals. Needless to say, no difference has been made between Germans and Poles since the foundation of the institution; and the work of the sisters' in country districts is mostly for the benefit of the Polish as well as the German inhabitants. In 1921, 2782 invalids with a total of 78159 days of sickness were treated and nursed in the Posen Hospital. Of these, 1043 were Evangelical, 1702 Catholic and 37 Jewish.

In spite of the fact, that the Institute came to be more and more applied for the benefit of the Poles, it was not long before Polish greed sought to lay hands upon it. It is significant that the leader of this campaign against the Deaconesses' House is a Polish-Catholic clergyman, Provost Malinski of Posen. This man vowed solemnly before his whole parish that he would not rest until the House had become Catholic, "Even if it cost him a barefoot pilgrimage to Warsaw."

It was due to his instigation that a demand was made to the trustees of the Institute that a Catholic House-Chaplain should be appointed. The lying excuse was made that it was often impossible to afford sick Catholics the last sacrament. It goes without saying that an Evangelical Institution with rights as a particular Evangelical church Parish could not agree to such a proposal, especially as the Institute, hard pressed itself for funds, would be expected to pay the salary of this Chaplain. Provost Malinski takes good care that the matter

should not be forgotten and from time to time the accusation, so often proved to be without foundation, is repeated in those press organs amenable to this influence. The chief of these, as always in matters anti-German or adverse to the Evangelical church, is the *Kurjer Poznański*. In 1923 it demanded that the Hospital, which is not a separate institution, but united with the House of Deaconesses, should be confiscated for the use of the University. The Evangelical nursing sisters were accused of cherishing a burning hatred against the Poles, of neglecting to summon a Polish clergyman to Poles dying in hospital, and of mocking at Polish complaints and lamentations. A few weeks later the paper again referred to the institution: 90 per cent of the sick under treatment there were Poles. Polish tolerance of the Hospital was going too far. Polish-Catholic houses were empty. It was time the Polish public took care that this "Watch on the Warthe" should disappear. All doctors who continued to send patients there, should be publicly denounced.

The persistent methods of Provost Malinski have also had their effect upon the officials. As early as 1920 the Voivode of Posen supported the demand that a Catholic House-Chaplain should be appointed.¹

The military authorities then made difficulties for the Institute. *Parts of the house were demanded for military purposes*, infection barracks were put in, and the entire work of the house thus seriously interfered with.

In the years of inflation, the Sick Clubs continually upset the balance of the accounts by tardy payments. Other officials did not pay at all.

Other difficulties were created by the pass officials. *Sisters whose work lay in those parts of the Province of Posen which had remained German, would have their passports refu-*

¹ This demand is renewed again and again from time to time, although any Catholic priest is allowed to visit any patient at any time. To be sure Catholic invalids recently complained in the *Prawda* that the priests unfortunately made very little use of this privilege. At the same time they spoke appreciatively of the Evangelical clergyman's care for the sick.

sed, even when they were summoned to the sick, or were supposed to return to the Mother House to be received into the Rest Home for sisters grown old and unable to work. The Mother House was thus forced at its own expense to provide for these sisters in hospitals or Old Peoples' Homes.

The sisters who do not live in the Mother House also have to suffer from official high-handedness. Polish fugitives who have returned to their country, have been housed in the Sisters' Holiday Home in Pontkau, although there was plenty of other accomodation in the village. A particularly brutal house visitation took place here, the whole flooring being torn up in one of the Sister's rooms, and holes dug in the earth beneath, ostensibly in order to find traces of a crime supposed to have been formerly committed on the spot, or according to another version, to search for buried treasure! At all events, the permission of the head of the house was not even asked beforehand and much damage was done, which was only remedied after the police officials had made an energetic protest. In another place, the District physician forbade the resident sister, who has been for many years in the service of this parish, to continue her nursing, on the score that she had not passed the State examination for nurses. In reality she had, of course, passed this examination, during the period of German rule. When she had brought proofs of this, she was permitted to continue to nurse the sick, but must get the permission of the District physician in each individual case. Thus, when a very sick woman begs for her help, she must first summon the doctor at her own cost from some distant part of his district; he diagnoses advanced consumption, which was already patent to everybody, pockets a high fee, and the nurse is at last free to do her work.

This policy of pin-pricks and petty annoyances is intended to worry the head of the Deaconesses' House into compliance with Polish wishes and to stultify the beneficent work of the House which extends over the whole of Posen and West Prussia.

The statements made to the League of Nations by the Polish Government in reply to the complaints of the *Deutsch-*

tums Bund, show that the State is willing to make use of the crudest lies and accusations in order to set itself right in the eyes of the world. These are the actual words relating to the House of Deaconesses, which occur in the first of these statements, which is a perfect network of lies (*si fecisti, nega!*).

"The case of the House of Deaconesses is Posen is a matter entirely for itself. The machinations of this society endanger the public safety and make it necessary for the Government to take strong measures which have been employed in a strictly legal manner."¹

In a further note to the League of Nations, dated July 5, 1922, the Polish Government affirms that the Deaconesses' House draws all its moral and material strength from Germany and is thoroughly alien to the life of the country. The truth is that sisters come almost exclusively from Polish territory, which may be seen by the fact that out of 341 deaconesses about 320 are Polish citizens. All donations for the institute also come from what is now Poland. In 1921 only 2 per cent of the total amount received consisted of donations from fellow-believers abroad. It has repeatedly been pointed out that the work of the house is very largely for the benefit of the Poles. It is outrageous that the Deaconesses should be accused in this Note of having taken part in German espionage during the Polish-Russian War. In reality no single complaint of this kind ever reached the ear of the Head of the House, and no sister was ever called to account for any such procedure.

b) *The Paulinum in Posen.*

The Paulinum in Posen is a Foundation for the reception of Evangelical children who are attending school in Posen. At the moment it shelters thirty children, whose fathers are mostly clergymen or teachers. There can be no doubt about the clerical character of the institution. Superintendent-General the Rev. Blau solemnly consecrated it in 1910. Dr. Balan, President of the Consistory, was for a long time chairman of the board of administration. Until 1923, the institution was conducted by a minister in holy orders; his place is now filled by deaco-

¹ Is the phenomenon recently observed, of sick convicts being frequently transferred to the House of Deaconesses, to be regarded as one of these measures? A police official must be continually posted in the house to look after them, and by this means the house is kept continually under police control without this becoming obvious.

nesses. Besides the boarding-school the business offices of the Provincial League for Internal Missions in Poland are housed in the buildings belonging to the Paulinum, also the closely-allied Evangelical-Church Leagues, the Evangelical Press League, the Provincial League of the Evangelical Womens' Aid Society and the Evangelical League of Young Women. The clerical character of the institute is thus beyond question, and in addition to this on the day when the Peace Treaty came into force, the board of administration consisted solely of persons who were Polish citizens. *The boarders also are all sons of Polish nationals.*

In spite of these facts, the Posen Committee of Liquidation, in its meeting of September 26, 1924, decided upon the *liquidation of the property by detention for the benefit of the State*, whereby the mere formality that the property was entered in the Register of Landed Property in the name of the Central Committee of Inland Missions of the German Evangelical Church was made to serve as an excuse for this procedure.

Protest was entered against this resolution by the parties concerned. In addition to this, the Provincial League for Inland Missions proposed to the Liquidation Office that it be permitted to purchase the Paulinum from the Liquidation Office. As a result of the protest, the process of liquidation was temporarily suspended. However, on February 13, 1925, the Board of Administration of the Paulinum and the Provincial League of Inland Missions received copies of the same letter from the Committee of Liquidation to the effect that the definite quashing of the process and the proposal of the Provincial League of Inland Mission to purchase the property were both rejected by the Committee of Liquidation. On the same date, February 13, the representatives of the United Evangelical Church were assured by word of mouth that "the matter was no longer of moment", for the Committee of Liquidation had just decided "according to its discretion" to cede the Paulinum to the Polish Evangelical Society, in other words, to the Polish Evangelical Congregation in Posen, which is under the direc-

torship of Superintendent-General Bursche in Warsaw! *This is the most humiliating factor in the whole affair and will not fail of its effect in the entire Evangelical world.* The representatives of this community declare, to be sure, that they volunteered to purchase the Paulinum only, because it was offered to them by the Chairman of the Committee of Liquidation, and because they did not wish it to fall into the hands of the Catholics. But this is hardly in accordance with the fact, that the *Głos ewangelicki* of Warsaw charges the United Church with the "crime" of resisting the liquidation of the Institute. The Church is reproached with "falling upon the Evangelical Poles", with "displaying a dog-in-the-manger attitude", and told that it "grudges the Paulinum to the Evangelical Poles".

The Committee of Liquidation fixed the sum of 35,400 Zloty, less 1000 Zloty liquidation costs, as damages for the confiscation of the Institute, including fittings and furniture. A competent architect assessed the value of the property without the furnishings at 298,000 Zloty.

On March 2, 1925, the German-Polish Arbitration Court in Paris which had been appealed to to quash the process of liquidation, issued a provisional order forbidding any alteration of the status quo and particularly any sale of the Paulinum. In spite of this, the Posen Committee of Liquidation demanded by letter of the Board of Administration of the Paulinum on March 5, that they should hand over the Paulinum to the new owners, namely the Polish-Evangelical Society in Posen, within 8 days, and should vacate the Paulinum within a further 10 days, failing which they were threatened with eviction at the hands of the bailiff. The *Kurier Poznański* comments on this proceeding with an explanation, no doubt officially inspired, that the Arbitration Court in Paris was not competent in this instance and the Government therefore refused to recognize its decision.

It should finally be mentioned that of course the "unregulated relation of the United Church towards the Polish State" also played its part in this affair; it served as an excuse for refusing the offer of the Provincial League for Inland Missions to purchase the Paulinum. The two cases cited here

do not stand alone as brutal and premeditated cases of robbery. They only are the cases which have become better known to the outside world than others, by no means, less provocative. A further list of cases is given in Appendix IV and even they by no means complete the list.

Besides these difficulties created by Polish officials for various individual Evangelical charities, there are those put in the way of the necessary collections for the upkeep of these institutions by the officials. The permission of the Voivode is necessary for every collection. The granting of this permission is, however, attended with conditions which are sometimes almost impossible of fulfilment. Thus it was demanded of the Provincial Society for Inland Missions, that whenever collecting was done the original permit of the Voivode must be shown, which was, of course, impossible, as one solitary collector cannot possibly solicit contributions from the entire territory. It was also demanded that after the conclusion of the collection, the Voivode should be informed, not only of the total proceeds of the parishes, but that the amount taken in every place, village or manor district should be reported separately. In the inflation period, the preparation of such lists would probably have swallowed up the greater part of the funds. In one district the rye which had been collected by the "Church Aid", which supported the charitable work, was confiscated and was only released, after much negotiation, when the rye began to rot in consequence of bad storage conditions. In another district the money collected was confiscated, in still another the collection itself was prevented.

If we come to consider the position of Evangelical charities in Poland and the behaviour of the Polish authorities as a whole, many a reader of the above account might be inclined to the opinion that this branch of church work had suffered comparatively little damage. Not many cases have been cited, and in most of these the institution in question has usually been able to withstand official onslaughts. But in the first place it must be remembered that the House of the

Deaconesses in Posen is the central-point of charity in Posen and Pommerellia, and this is still in danger. Numerous Evangelical parishes are supplied with parish nursing-sisters from here. If this institute were to succumb, it would no longer be possible to supply the parishes with the helpers necessary to carry on the work of charity, the more so as the Polish officials would not permit nursing-sisters to be sent from German Deaconesses' Homes. Pommerellia is also dependent upon the institute in Posen, since the dismemberment of West Prussia has cut it off from its central charities and the only Mother House in Pommerellia, that in Vandsburg, does not train its sisters of charity for nursing and parish work so much as for the work of evangelisation.

But there are other serious considerations which come into play. It must not be forgotten that the German-Evangelical population is now entirely dependent upon church institutions. The numerous humanitarian institutions, the District Hospitals, the work of the former Patriotic and German Women's Societies, the Red Cross — these have either ceased to exist, have left the country, or have been devoted to the benefit of the Poles. Even when the charities supported by these societies, such as kindergarten schools or nursing-stations, were left in the hands of the Evangelical parishes, they have been taken away again by means of liquidation. In the last few weeks there have been quite a number of such cases, which point to a systematic attempt to destroy the last remnants of German humanitarian charities.

6. The Decline of German Evangelical School Life and its influence upon Church Life.

The description of the German Evangelical schools and their dire distress and want in Posen and Pommerellia, brings us to the most painful chapter in the *battle for existence* waged by the Evangelical German element in Poland. It was precisely here that the least fear had been felt at the time these terri-



The Evangelical Boarding-School; at Lissa.

tories were ceded to Poland. The treaty clause for the protection of minorities seemed to promise ample security to the German school system.

Article 9 of this Treaty reads as follows: "In matters concerning public education the Polish government shall grant due facilities in those cities and districts in which a considerable proportion of Polish nationals speaking a language other than Polish may be residing, in order to assure that the children of Polish nationals may be given instruction in their own language in the elementary schools."

The execution of this ordinance is based upon the edict of the Minister for the whilom Prussian sector, dated March 10, 1920. This edict had set up as its leading principle the following: "*the assurance of Polish instruction for the Polish children, of German instruction for the German children.*" "The division of schools according to religions which has hitherto prevailed, is to be preserved. The undenominational or unsectarian schools are to be divided as far possible according to religions and nationalities." This decree of the Minister was entirely in accordance with the law for the protection of minorities. On the other hand, it was sheer arbitrariness which decided that the necessity for establishing a German school should be recognized only in cases in which at least 40 German school-children were at hand.

This clause was ameliorated only by Paragraph 4 of the ordinance which reads: "This provision is to be suspended only in cases when the number of German children should decrease during two consecutive years. In connection with those schools which after the close of this school-year reveal for the first time an attendance of less than 40 children, a period of at least two years must be permitted to elapse in order to ascertain whether the number of children is subject to still further decrease."

The dire results of setting so arbitrary a figure as 40 must be clear in spite of the limitations just cited. For we need merely consider that ever since 1920 the tremendous decrease in births during the years of war was bound to make itself felt. Inasmuch as the birth-rate had sunk steadily during the years 1915—17, it was to be further assumed that a school which for the first time had fallen below an atten-

dance of 40 in 1922, was bound to attain a still lower attendance during the two following years. This, of course, made the security clause mentioned in the foregoing wholly futile.

Nevertheless, the German Evangelical element might have been able to endure these conditions, had the Polish authorities adhered strictly to the regulations of the ministerial decrees. This, however, was not the case.

A statistical abstract, compiled by the Evangelical Consistory in Posen, reveals the fact that in the whole of the ceded area there had been

on Sept 1, 1914	2022	evangelical elementary schools
„ „ 1, 1921	1478	„ „ „
„ „ 1, 1923	552	„ „ „

To these may be added 180 evangelical classes in undenominational schools, in which however instruction was in part given by Catholic teachers.

There were still 889 Evangelical teachers, and of these 189 had been installed during the Prussian regime, 312 during the Polish regime and 338 auxiliary teachers.

The Evangelical schools were attended by 38,660 school-children. 4478 children attended undenominational schools with Evangelical teachers, 1626 attended undenominational schools with German Catholic teachers. Catholic schools with instruction in Polish were attended by 6625 children, and 1401 children had no instruction at all!

The last figure shows a considerable improvement as compared with the figures given at the beginning of the year 1922. There were at that time 5220 children in Pommerellia and the Netzegau without any instruction whatever, the later figures give only 1401. This increase, however favourable in itself is in part explained by the emigration of many German families which had taken place in the meantime, also partly by the fact that the Polish school authorities had become more

and more ruthless in forcing German children into Polish schools.¹

Such are the facts. How could things come to such a pass? It is clear that the emigration of numberless German families is one of the chief causes of the decline. When 60 to 90 percent of the Germans leave a city, one school after the other is bound to succumb. And so far as the country

¹ Statistics dating from 1924, and compiled by the German section in the Seim show that in the District of Schubin 386 children out of 1731, that is 22.2 percent go to Polish schools, in the District of Culm 799 out of 1276 German school-children, that is 62.6 percent, are forced to go to schools in which the tuition is in Polish, and that in the District of Graudenz 765 out of 1642 children, or 46 percent, are in a similar predicament.

Whilst this pamphlet is going to press, the German section of the Seim has just published statistics regarding the German school conditions in the whole of Pommerellia, based upon the current school year 1924—1925. The total number of German pupils in Pommerellia is set at 16,041.

Of these 7758 went to Polish schools, 8212 went to German schools and 71 were without any tuition whatever.

The number of children without schooling is therefore very low. On the other hand the number of children visiting Polish schools has been steadily on the increase, and amounts to 48.3 percent, that is to say almost half of the total number of German scholars. Conditions are worst in the District of Soldau, where 92.8 percent of the German Evangelical children visit Polish (in part Polish-Evangelical) schools. Here every child with a Polish (Masurian) name is sent to a Polish school in spite of the declaration of the parents that they are German and desire to have their children given tuition in German. The same thing occurs in South Posen and in Upper Silesia. Figures are most favorable in the District of Briesen, where 337 children out of 1174, that is, 29.1 percent go to Polish schools, though here again the number of unschooled children (45) is greatest.

These statistics established furthermore that of the 7758 children attending Polish schools 1438 have been received into German neighboring schools, and that new collective schools with a sufficient number of pupils are being established for 4098, and that private schools might be founded for 1474, these schools having a smaller number of pupils. Thus there would remain only 748 children for whom, owing to geographical reasons, there would be no possibility of a German schooling.

districts are concerned, an emigration of 40 to 60 percent naturally resulted, in connection with the decrease of births of the war and post-war period, in bringing about the end of a great number of once flourishing German schools.

We must also once more revert to the ruinous emigration of German teachers. In 1914 there existed 2022 Evangelical schools in the districts of Posen and Pommerellia, in addition to which there were numerous undenominational schools in Pommerellia, with Evangelical teachers. The number of Evangelical teachers might be estimated fairly at 5000 to 6000, and among these were many who were Polish nationals. Of these teachers only 189 were still on hand on Sept. 1, 1923, — in some districts only a single one remained. This was bound to operate disastrously. The fact that in 1922 there were 155 German communities in Pommerellia and in the Netzegau with 40 to 155 school-children yet with no German school, cannot be laid entirely upon the Polish government. This condition would not have been possible, had there not been such a great emigration of teachers. The Provincial Synod of 1921 was therefore quite right in its resolutions upon the condition of the Evangelical schools to complain of "the frequently precipitate and selfish emigration of numerous Evangelical teachers which had resulted in robbing thousands of children of systematic instruction."

And yet we cannot overlook in this place a distinct culpability of the Polish government. It is well known that the emigration of these teachers was very welcome to the Polish authorities. The number of those with whose services the Polish government had dispensed in advance, was, it is true, comparatively small. But the tendency to emigration was encouraged by indirect measures of the Poles. *The individual teacher was molested, but the great majority of German teachers were forced into a serious conflict with their consciences through the demand that they take the service oath of fealty to the Polish government.* It must, of course, be conceded that the Polish state was justified in demanding that teachers in state schools, who were almost

in all cases Polish nationals, should render the oath of service. The form of the oath was, however, such that the intention of making it difficult for the teachers to resolve upon taking it was all too manifest. In addition to this the teachers were left for a long time in doubt as to their economic condition. Young male teachers were sent military enrolment orders. The intention of forcing the teachers to vote for Germany and thus forcing them sooner or later to emigrate became most manifest, a few months before the expiration of the term for making the option (Jan. 10, 1922) by examining each teacher by protocol in the school-district of Thorn, that is, in Pommern, and asking him as to whether he was aware that according to a ministerial decree of June 4, 1920 he was forced to undergo until June 30, 1922, an examination in Polish, and also whether he was informed as to the degree of the knowledge that was required of him? All who are aware of the difficulties entailed in learning the Polish language, especially for men engaged in professional activities, will be able to realize that many were thereby forced to declare for Germany. It should be mentioned here that the Polish Seim is at this moment discussing the project of a new code of service for teachers, article 5 of which reads:

"Only Polish citizens of irreproachable antecedents are eligible for the post of teacher, and only such as possess full citizenship rights and are able to prove by testimonials that they possess the requisite qualifications for the particular category of schools, that they are able to meet the conditions necessary for the exercise of the profession of teacher and who have a fluent command of the Polish language both in speaking and in writing."

By means of such a law any evilly-disposed Polish School Board would be able to remove from office all German Evangelical teachers who might still be active.

The Polish school authorities having thus manifestly encouraged the emigration of the German teachers, naturally had the duty of seeing that sufficient and timely substitutes would be provided. But this was not done. In addition to the undenominational German Seminary in Graudenz which was in process of being closed down, the only school left open was the German-Evangelical Teachers' Seminary

in Bromberg. This, however, was shut down in 1923 under the pretext that difficulties had already been encountered in finding teachers' places for those graduates who had left the Seminary in March 1923. As a matter of fact on Sept. 1, 1923, there were 44 German schools or classes without teachers. The lack of teachers which could not be covered by substitutes from the Bromberg or Graudenz Seminaries, was met in a desultory way by means of assistant teachers trained in rapid-fire courses from three to ten months. The assistants were, of course, not first-class, but they enabled a great number of children to obtain some kind of schooling and some of these assistants displayed great zeal and continued to develop themselves in a commendable way, under proper direction. But it soon became apparent that the Polish school authorities had recourse to these assistant forces only to dismiss them again when it came to closing down German schools with too small an attendance. Thus, on Sept. 1, 1923, some 200 assistant teachers in the Voivode District of Posen alone were suddenly dismissed. This would, of course, not have been possible with regularly trained teachers, since these are classed as state officials.

As to provisions for the future, nothing is clear. It is however, to be surmised that the Evangelical teachers who are to be trained at the Polish seminaries in Schildberg and Soldau and therefore in the Polish spirit, are to serve as substitute forces not only for the Polish Evangelical schools in South Posen and in the Soldau region, but also for the German-Evangelical schools in the whole of Posen and Pommerellia.

How little the Polish government troubles to do away with the necessity and want of the German schools is most clearly proved by its adverse attitude towards the erection of German or Evangelical collective schools. In the memorial to the League of Nations already referred to, we read, of course:

"In such cases in which the number of German children in a community should be less than 40, the Polish school boards permit these children to be instructed in the German school of the neighboring community, or they even go so far as to create a new German school which is destined to take up the children from two

or more communities." The authors of this Polish document have the temerity to add: "This rule knows no exception."

In reality it is a rule that consists only of exceptions. If the principles set up in the foregoing had been taken seriously, it would have been an easy matter to satisfy the school desires of the German-Evangelical population. Upon the basis of the statistics mentioned in the foregoing and relating to school conditions in the Districts of Culm, Graudenz and Schubin, the German contingent in the Seim recently proved that of the 386 German school-children in the District of Schubin who now attend Polish schools, 315 might be easily taken care of in the German neighboring schools already existing, that in the District of Culm, of 799 German children visiting Polish schools, 179 attend existing German neighbor schools and that 562 children might be enrolled in 12 public collective schools which were still to be established, each of which would have more than 40 pupils and finally that of the 765 German children who attend Polish schools or classes, whilst 7 new collective schools were to be established for 435 children. If, in the districts named, in addition 71 or respectively 50 and 98 children were to be put in private elementary schools which were to be called into being, then in the District of Schubin all German children might be taken out of Polish schools, whilst in the District of Culm and Graudenz 8, or respectively 98 children would remain who, owing to an unfavorable geographical situation, could not attend school and for whom the parents would have to provide otherwise. This table of statistics proves that with a little good will the Polish authorities could easily do justice to the wishes of the German minorities. *But this good will is lacking.* Instead of establishing collective schools, these have been frequently suspended where they existed, so that Polish schools which lached pupils might obtain the necessary quatum.

The reduction in the number of the teachers, a procedure similar to that which Germany introduced for reasons of economy, was also utilized for the *further destruction of the German school system.* German schools which had less than 40 pupils were at once deprived of their

teachers, Polish teachers on the contrary, were not dismissed even when only a few children attended their classes. In Klein Leistenau, for example, there is a school officially described as Catholic, attended by 34 children; only 8 of these are Polish Catholic, the other 26 are German and Evangelical. The parents of the Evangelical children demanded that their children be transferred to the neighbouring German school in Lindenberg. This was refused in order that the Catholic school might be kept going for the benefit of the 8 Polish children. Polish teachers were newly installed in other districts for a few Catholic children. In Karwenhof (District of Putzig) there are 36 German children, to whom we must add 4 children from Karwin. There are only 5 Polish children in Karwenhof, and 2 from Karwin who have been put in this school. For the sake of these 7 Polish children, who could easily go to school in a neighbouring Polish school, 40 German children are obliged to learn their lessons in the Polish language. This reduction of teachers has even been made use of to deprive German schools with more than 40 children of their German teacher and replace him by a Polish one for the sake of a small number of Polish children. This happened for instance, in Plessen, district of Graudenz. Seventeen Polish children who attended the neighbouring Polish school in Szonowo were transferred to the school in Plessen, where there were 44 German children, and the German instructor was then replaced by a Pole.

Precisely as in the question of the collective schools, the Polish educational authorities set one difficulty after another in the way of founding German private schools. Article 8 of the Protection of Minorities Agreement accedes to Polish citizens who belong to a racial, religious or national minority, the right to found, conduct and watch over charitable, religious or social institutions, schools and other means of education, at their own cost, and gives them the right of a free use of their own language in such institutions, as well as the free exercise of their religion. Articles 109 and 110 of the Polish Constitution expressly confirm this right. In relation to this, the

Polish memorial to the League of Nations, already so often mentioned, makes the following statement:

"Thus permission to found a German private school has never been refused, if the founders had proceeded in accordance with the provisions of the old Prussian officials, which are still in force. The German private schools without exception receive permission to establish themselves in buildings belonging to public schools, so long as such a measure does not interfere with the normal curriculum of these schools."

Here again the precise opposite of what is stated is the actual truth. Where German private secondary schools are concerned — and for these Germans are entirely dependent upon private schools — it would be easy enough to bring proofs that the practices of the Polish officials not only entail the greatest difficulties for the conduct of German private schools, but frequently make work absolutely impossible. All teachers in German private high schools who were not Polish citizens, have one by one had their permission to teach rescinded, and thus the further conducting of these schools has frequently been rendered impossible. Still further measures have now been taken. On September 12, 1925, a few days after the commencement of the new school year, new orders of the School Board of Trustees in Posen arrived in Bromberg, which forbade eleven teachers at the German classical school and the Girls' College to continue teaching. Among these eleven teachers were the Principals of the two colleges, and the three Evangelical clergy of Bromberg, Superintendant Ahsmann, Vicar Heseziel and Vicar Lichtermann, who had been imparting religious instruction. All these teachers were Polish citizens. No reasons were given. The members of the Seim, who applied to the Posen Board of Trustees, were referred to the Ministry in Warsaw, which, however, was not yet informed of the affair. In the meantime, it has at least been possible to obtain an extension of the permission to give instruction until December 31.

It is plain that all this is done with an object, since the measures taken by these officials are not based upon the clear provisions of the Polish Constitution, but upon old Prussian

decrees dating from the period of the "Kulturkampf". But it would take us too far if we were to consider here the position of the higher German private schools as a whole. We shall confine ourselves to the private elementary schools. Up to now there have only been a small number of these, although their founding presents the only possibility of saving the German-Evangelical children from the obligation to attend a Polish school. The reason is that the erection and upkeep of such private schools demands considerable sacrifices on the part of the fathers of families or parishes concerned. They must not only continue to pay their school fees to the local School Association, but must bear alone all the costs of the school-room, its furniture, the necessary books and apparatus and the salaries of the teachers. The land on which these schools, which were formerly Evangelical, are built, was made over to the State, at the time of the de-nationalization of schools, (a measure justified by reference to the Prussian General Land Law), and was then handed over to the Catholic school communities, even though much of it was officially registered as belonging to the Evangelical school community. But even when the schools were not thus handed over, then they were diverted to other purposes rather than that they should be put at the disposal of the German-Evangelical private school. For instance, the public schoolhouse belonging to the parish of Wyganow in the district of Koschmin, in which the private elementary school was housed, was taken away from the parish and the following excuse made: "We do not in any way deny the right of Evangelical fathers of families to erect private schools, but we cannot allow that they should profit by public school arrangements." One should compare the text of the Polish manifesto just quoted with this pronouncement. In Slesin near Bromberg the schoolhouse which had been refused the private school was used as a post-office. Here the private school was closed even after it had been removed to a private house, and in Celbowo, in the district of Putzig, the opening of a private school was not permitted, although the parish had built itself a special schoolhouse for the purpose. The demand of the Government that all private schools should be



The Evangelical Boarding-School — at Lissa, Class-room.

subject to a concession, has put further difficulties in the way of founding such schools. This concession is not given to the community which wishes to establish the school, but to the teacher who conducts it. The granting of the concession is, however, made dependent upon the fulfilment of certain conditions — prominent among which are Polish nationality, knowledge of the Polish language and freedom from political suspicion.

This attitude of the authorities made the constitutional right of founding private schools almost illusory, and this is especially true so long as the heads of German-Evangelical families, who support such schools, are not exempted from the duty of paying fees to the public school associations to which they belong and so long as they do not enjoy the right of using school property which is not urgently needed for other school purposes, for the needs of private schools.

In conclusion we may say: *There can be no doubt as to the guilt of the Polish authorities so far as the decline of the German-Evangelical school life in Poland is concerned. This guilt is made manifest, first of all, by:*

1. *The arbitrary and ruthless shutting-down of all schools that have less than 40 pupils.*

2. *By the dissolution and non-establishment of German-Evangelical collective schools.*

3. *By the difficulties placed in the way of those who wish to establish private schools.*

4. *By the negligence with which they treat the problem of providing successors to the German teachers' staff.*

It is easy to see how severe a blow is levelled at the Evangelical religious education of the young by all this decline of German school life which is essentially analogous with Evangelical school life.

How very little inclination even the highest Polish officials show to accomodate even the most modest wishes of the Church, is shown by the answer given by the Ministry on April 23, 1924, to the German members of the Seim, who had complained that the school officials had forbidden Evangelical clergymen whose Polish citizenship was not recognized, to

give religious instruction. The Ministry declared, "that it saw no objection to entrusting the pastor with the Evangelical religious instruction in public and private elementary schools in individual cases, where no actual teacher was at hand, even though these pastors might not possess Polish citizenship, so long as they filled the office of clergy with the knowledge and consent of the officials concerned." This declaration was certainly of use in individual cases. It could not lead to any really substantial alteration, however, since it left the decision in individual cases entirely in the hands of lower officials.

Finally it might be mentioned that in consequence of the general ignorance and particularly the religious ignorance¹ with which many children entered upon their confirmation classes, as a result of the unfavourable school conditions, the United Church was obliged to decide to make attendance at confirmation classes dependent upon the passing of a special examination, and to replace the former period of one year's instruction for Confirmation by two years' preparation. Unfortunately this measure is also frequently rendered illusory by the fact that the children in their second year of preparation cannot obtain the dispensation from school which is made necessary by the distance, often several miles, which they must traverse to reach the parsonage. Attempts to assemble these children and other persons who do not partake of religious instruction and give them religious lessons outside school hours by private persons, such as deaconesses or squires' wives, has been forbidden, on the score that it is an evasion of scholastic provisions. The fathers of families who lent their houses for these classes were threatened with punishment by the police. Only recently the Polish officials appear to have at last grasped the fact that these assemblies are of a purely clerical nature, and that the school and the police have nothing to do with them.

With the religious instruction of the young in such a condition, the work of the Confirmation Institute at

¹ Little children from the Catholic schools already bring home the custom of making the sign of the cross and repeat prayers to the Virgin Mary and the Saints.

Wolfskirch would be of enormous importance. Unfortunately three of the buildings belonging to the Institute have been confiscated by the Railway Company for their officials, and up to the present it has not been possible to recover the houses.

In spite of everything, however, we may venture to hope that the United Evangelical Church will also be equal to the problems that arise from the lack of German-Evangelical schools. In the past few years the lesson has been well learnt that we must not to be crushed by difficulties, but must strive to overcome them by energy and confident faith. In these qualities there lies the best guarantee for the fulfilment of the wish with which the report of the Consistorium on the schools, already cited, concludes:

"In the meantime, our parishes and particularly all who are called to a leading position must concentrate their attention upon the point that the children do not remain without Evangelical education, in spite of the unfavourable scholastic conditions. All Evangelical houses must again become mother-schools, nurseries of Evangelical belief and Evangelical thought in the sense* of a new Amos Comenius — nurseries in which the children learn from the mothers how to pray and are instructed by the fathers in the wealth of the Holy Scriptures, as well as encouraged by the inspiring pictures of the splendid loyalty to their faith practised by their forefathers, to shirk no sacrifice and no effort necessary for the preservation of their faith and their church. The Lord rewards the upright with success, and loyalty is promised a rich reward.

May loyal endurance and honest effort ensure, with God's help, that the growing youth of our national Church may find a true Evangelical education secured to them for all time. So help us God!"

7. Superintendent-General Bursche as an Accomplice of the Polish Government in its Battle against the United Evangelical Church.

This pamphlet cannot be brought to a conclusion without a word being said of the influence of Superintendent-General Bursche of Warsaw, a man who has rendered such invaluable

aid to the Polish Government in its war of destruction waged upon the United Evangelical Church in Poland. To be sure, we cannot give an exhaustive account of this man and his doings. If we wished to do this, it would be necessary to go into detail as to the situation of the Lutheran Church in former Russian Poland and we should have to speak in detail of the disputes that ensued in recent years. We have no space for this. But we must point out certain facts in order that the part played by Bursche in the battle of the Polish Government against the United Church may be understood.

Bursche stands at the head of a Lutheran Church whose members are for the most part Germans. At least 80 percent, probably nearly 90 percent, of the church members are German. Only the intelligentsia are Polish. But the names met with here are also German, almost without exception, that is to say, they have become Polish only in the course of the last few decades. The absolute lack of higher-grade schools in Russian Poland forced the ambitious sections of the German element to seek their higher education in Russian or Polish educational institutions. Since there was absolutely no contact in Russian Poland with German culture in the old home country, these elements lacked the strength to resist the foreign influence. When the young students of theology arrived at the German University of Dorpat to study, they were already so convinced of the superiority of Polish culture that their student years were no sufficient counter-balance to the previous Polish influence.

Thus in Congress Poland we have an Evangelical Church whose members are for the most part German, and perfectly aware of their Germanism, but whose pastors, themselves the sons of good German farmers and schoolmasters, feel themselves absolutely Polish, with the exception of a very small minority, and are anti-German with the fanaticism peculiar to the renegade.

For two decades Superintendent-General Bursche has been the head of this church. Even in the days of Russian rule, all his efforts were bent upon the Polon-

ization of the church which had been entrusted to him. On this account he introduced an examination in the Polish language for the theologians, although Russian was the official language and in nine-tenths of the parishes the sermons were given entirely in German: on this account he demanded that at least once a month in all parishes a sermon should be preached in Polish, even when there was no occasion for this. For this reason he prevented any accretion of pastors from without, especially from the Baltic lands, although there was a terrible scarcity of pastors. During the war I myself took care of a parish in Russian Poland which had been without a pastor for decades. This parish numbered 4000 souls and contained one church and ten prayer meeting houses. Some of the places to be preached at lay as much as 25 kilometres away from the centre of the parish, and thereby they were under the care of clergymen who in their turn lived 30 or 40 kilometres off and were themselves in charge of widespread peasant parishes numbering 7000—8000 souls. But the parishes were preferably subjected to spiritual neglect, rather than call in help from outside which might have been detrimental to the attempts at Polonization.

Then came the Peace of Versailles. Large pieces of territory with a numerous Evangelical population were added to the newly-arisen Poland. The Evangelical believers in this territory were for the most part Germans. A popular vote was to bring about the decision in other parts of the territory. Here the population consisted for the most part of Evangelical Masurians, who are racially related to the Poles. The possibility of a great Polish-Evangelical Church presented itself to Bursche in case these became part of Poland. He therefore put himself at the head of a "Masurian Committee" which took in hand the religious influencing of the Masurians in preparation for the plebiscite. An exhortation which he addressed to the "Masurian brothers" shows his method of work. We quote these words: "For centuries you have bowed your necks beneath a foreign yoke. Brute force ruled over you in the place of right. The Prussian shamelessly forced you to accept his will, his power, his school and administration,

his German language. Impudent Prussia, which violated your consciences, has been struck to earth by the World War. The end of your sufferings is near. You shall at last be united with your beloved Poland, the land of your ancestors, with which you have your language and your customs in common." The appeal promises reduction of taxes, great prosperity, better order and discipline, new schools, in which the children shall be instructed by agreeable methods and not, as hitherto, in such a manner as to render them dull and stupid. Above all the Masurians would find in Poland that which was dearer to them than their own lives: freedom of conscience. Bursche's agitation ended in complete failure.

It would now have been the right time for Bursche to alter his aims and by rallying up the Evangelical Churches in the various districts of Poland to have made of the Evangelical Church a factor with which Catholic Poland would have been forced to reckon. The melancholy history of the Evangelical Church in Poland in past centuries must have pointed out this path to anyone who had the welfare of the Church at heart. But Bursche was first of all a Pole. And he therefore allowed himself to be misused by the Polish Government in its battle against the United Church in Posen-West Prussia, and allows this abuse to go on to this day.

To begin with, he is never tired of combating the "alleged legend" of Polish intolerance. Some years ago in Holland, a clergyman who had seen with his own eyes the conditions prevailing in the Evangelical Church in Poland, gave lectures on the extremity of this Church, whereupon Bursche sent the following telegram to the Dutch press:

"The alleged martyrdom of the Protestant Church in Poland is being reported abroad only for anti-Polish political reasons. Poland, which is in the great majority Catholic, is free of all fanaticism. The laws guarantee religious freedom. The leaders are filled with the spirit of tolerance. There is no religious persecution."

It would be sufficient to counter this attempt to whitewash Poland from all religious fanaticism to refer to the earlier pages of this pamphlet, or to point to the utterances of

Wachowiak, the present Voivode of Thorn, who in a reference to the Polish population of Pommerellia some time ago, gave expression to the fear "that the religious feeling which runs so deep here might degenerate into an aggressive fanaticism, which would greatly damage our peaceable life in common with the Evangelical Germans". The dishonesty of such attempts is revealed more plainly, however, by experiences drawn from the realm of the Lutheran Church in Poland.

Thus Bursche's own organ, the *Zwiastun Evangeliczny*, once printed a report of a case of Polish violence in the parish of Konskavola, in the district of Pulawy. This parish has for 150 years been in possession of a building which contains a chapel and a school with living-rooms for the teacher. In March 1919 the Polish parish of Konskavola confiscated this piece of Evangelical property. The church, to be sure, was restored in obedience to the command of the Government Commissioner, but popular rage could no longer be controlled and in February, 1920, the church was positively destroyed, the altar, the chancel and the harmonium thrown into the street, the benches and the wooden belfry sawn to pieces. The officials, who are supposed to be filled with the spirit of tolerance, sealed up the church on the pretence of protecting it from further destruction and then retired. The Ministry of the Interior maintained a persistent silence in the face of all demands to have the guilty parties punished and the destroyed building restored. Unpunished and jubilant, the inhabitants of Konskavola finally broke every window in the Church.

The case of the prayer-meeting house in Svoboda-Svion-wicka is still worse. This meeting-house, combined with a school, was built exclusively at the cost of the Evangelical population. During the year 1919, the Polish language was substituted for the German as medium of instruction in the school, the Evangelical teacher was dismissed and a Catholic schoolmistress appointed in his stead. The Catholic population, however, was not yet satisfied with the surrender of the school, a surrender that was entirely contrary to its statutes. Provoked by the local clergy, the Catholics assembled before

the meeting-house on April 25, 1921, broke open the door, threw the church furniture out of doors, smeared the inscriptions with lime-wash and arranged a school class-room in the prayer-meeting hall. After many appeals from the Evangelical population and the Lutheran Consistory in Warsaw, the Ministry of Education at last, in March, 1922, ordered the local authorities to return the prayer-meeting hall to the Evangelical congregation. These officials, however, did not carry out the order. The congregation then repeatedly appealed to the Ministry to hasten the restoration of the hall. Since the appeals had no effect, the German members of the Seim were called upon to help. They actually succeeded so far that the Voivode in Lodz was again called upon to ensure that the previously issued ministerial Order be actually put into force. The day of restoration was fixed for March 21, 1923. Since the Polish population threatened to oppose by force the carrying out of the order by the authorities, the restoration of the hall did *not* take place on the day appointed. The matter was again put up for discussion in the Ministry of Education. Here no reason to alter the decision was found, and for the third time, the Ministry issued order that the meeting-house should be restored to the Evangelical congregation. May 23, 1923, was appointed as the final date. During the night of May 22, however, the meeting-house was set on fire, and burnt down, together with the school. When the members of the Evangelical congregation arrived on the scene of the fire, they met there a certain Radlinski with his thirteen-year old son, who informed them that the relatives of the schoolmistress had left their rooms by way of the window, the boy had awakened of his own accord and led the cow out of the stable. The witnesses declare, however, that all the windows were closed. There was nothing left in the schoolmistress' apartment except an iron bedstead, — the benches, the table and other articles were missing from the school. The schoolmistress herself was not at home. The week previous her father had visited her every day, and had always taken things home with him. There is therefore no doubt that the burning-down of

the house was prepared beforehand and the inhabitants informed of the plan. In spite of this, neither the local police nor the representatives of the magistrate took any steps to discover the perpetrators, so that it was left for the German delegates to the Seim to take up the matter and by means of an interpellation to force the responsible minister to proceed in the matter.

We need only remind the reader of the *prayer-meeting house* in Schladow which was used by the Catholic schoolmaster as a *cow-stable*.

This case has, moreover, found a parallel in the German colony of Bogdanka, parish of Cycow. When the German colonists who had been driven out by the Russians in 1915, returned in 1918, they found shelter in the school-house, which had remained uninjured, whereas the dwelling-houses had been burned to the ground. The room used for prayers was at once put to use again for Bible meetings. In 1919 the parish succeeded once more in obtaining a preceptor. Before it was possible for this man to take up office, the Polish village-mayor made his appearance, turned the homeless German families out of the school and forbade the Germans to hold religious services in the chapel. Soon after a Catholic schoolmaster was installed. When the school barn was blown over in a storm, the schoolmaster used up the wood for firewood. He made a fowl-house out of the chapel. The laying-baskets for the hens stood on the steps of the altar. In 1922, his successor tore down the fence and began gradually to loosen from their foundations the bricks underlying the chapel. All petitions to the Inspector of Schools and to the Starost have been of no avail, so that the German Contingent in the Seim has been obliged to make an interpellation to the responsible minister.

The confiscation of vicarages for military and other State purposes has by no means remained confined to the territory formerly Prussian. It was not before 1922 that Seim-Deputy Spickermann received an answer to his interpellation regarding the confiscation of the vicarages in Lolo and

Zagurow. One of these was being used as a post-office, the other as a hospital for infectious diseases. There is now a prospect that both will shortly be vacated.

But the Catholic predilections of the Polish State make themselves felt by the Lutheran Church at every turn. Let us recall the question of mixed marriages. A statement in the *Zwiastun Evangeliczny* shows plainly enough what a burning question this is for the Evangelical parishes which have become so largely Polish in feeling, as for example, Warsaw. According to this statement, 140 mixed marriages and 120 purely Evangelical marriages were celebrated in the Warsaw Evangelical congregation in 1921, in 1922, 168 mixed marriages and 122 purely Evangelical marriages. These statistics draw a sigh from the *Zwiastun*, which laments that the old Evangelical Warsaw will soon be found nowhere save in the Mlynarska (the Warsaw Evangelical Cemetery.) It is perfectly clear even to Bursche what the Roman practice with regard to mixed marriages and the inability of the Polish State to stand up against this, must mean for the Lutheran Church. No one has noticed that Bursche's influence on the Polish Government, otherwise so great, has been able to effect anything whatever in regard to this question. It was recently established in the Polish Seim that his protests in this question were simply left unanswered by the Ministry.

Catholic intolerance, however, does not even respect the person of Bursche himself. When Bursche was in Posen, in April, 1924, certain Polish newspapers welcomed him as a fiery patriot and referred to him as *Ksiadz¹ biskup*. The *Przewodnik Katolicki* protested energetically against the use of these expressions, saying that such titles could not be applied to a Protestant clergyman, even though he be worthy of all honour, like the ardent patriot Bursche.

Finally, shall we remind the reader that the destruction of the German schools² makes the Evangelical education of

¹ This word is Polish for "priest."

² According to official figures, 276 German schools were closed in Congress Poland in 1923. According to private figures, out of

the children almost impossible also in Congress Poland, that here too, the Polish State, which, so willingly fulfils its financial obligations towards the Catholic Church, withholds all such monies from the Evangelical Church and that, the Church has up to now waited in vain for the confirmation of its constitution, agreed upon in 1923?

If Bursche, in the face of these facts, still makes bold to say that Catholic Poland is free of all fanaticism, and its officials are filled with the spirit of tolerance, this can only be taken as a further proof of the fact that Bursche is more than any thing else — a politician.

But Bursche does not by any means confine himself to defending the Polish State against the charge of intolerance, on the contrary, he takes upon himself the reproaches commonly levelled by the Polish Government against the United Evangelical Church and openly defends the demands made by the State upon the United Church. If one were to investigate Bursche's actual part in these reproaches and demands, the results would no doubt be painful.

We may mention in this place the conversation which Bursche had in April, 1924 with the representative of the fanatically anti-German and Catholic *Kurier Poznański* which made a great sensation in all Evangelical Poland. This deserves to be reprinted verbatim, since it gives a deep insight into the workings of Bursche's mind and the work done by him against the United Church. The *Kurier* reports:

"During the period of oppression, the Evangelical confession in Posen was inseparable from German nationality. This is the reason that when the first Evangelical Poles began to stream into our city after the Germans had been driven out, they were greeted by their fellow-believers, the Germans, with unconcealed dislike. More and more Evangelical Poles continued to arrive, especially from the Russian parts of Poland and from the region of Teschen. They could not reconcile themselves with the special congregation and from Easter 1920 on, they held regular services in the Old Lutheran Church in the Garten Strasse. To-day there are upwards

534 schools which existed in 1919 and in which instruction was given in the German language, only 60 are still in existence, although the German population here has increased rather than diminished.

of 500 Evangelical Poles. The organization of their congregation has already progressed so far that they have decided to constitute themselves a parish and to maintain a vicar. Yesterday, on April 6. the election of the vicar of the Polish Lutheran Parish took place. Bishop Julius Bursche came from Warsaw to Posen on this account. He is the head of the Lutheran church in Posen.

The German Protestants made no attempt to conceal their dislike of the establishment of Polish Evangelical church services in our town, and they are especially averse to the founding of an Evangelical Polish living in Posen.

"The Germans here," — complains Bishop Bursche — "have far too many churches in Posen. They recently dissolved the Evangelical parish of Jersitz and this church now stands empty. We have been in negotiation with them as to the renting of this unnecessary church. However, they demanded one billion a month for the rent. They would not take off a mark. They would rather let the church stand empty than allow Polish Evangelical religious services to be held in it."

I asked: "What is the reason of such hatred? Is there such a great dogmatic difference between the Lutheran Church and the United Evangelical Church?"

"Not at all! There are no dogmatic differences between the Evangelical churches. The differences are merely political and racial. The Lutheran Church united the Evangelical Poles, whereas the United Evangelical Church is a German church. The old Prussian spirit imbues it. Its pastors always have their eyes on Berlin and will not have anything to do with the Evangelical-theological faculty in Warsaw. They hate us as Poles. This church has such chauvinistic tendencies that we keep up no relations with it. In 1919 I represented to them that at any rate they must take account of the altered political conditions, break with Berlin and make themselves independent, but they would not listen. Later to be sure, they did this, but they have not altered a jot of their antagonistic standpoint where our State is concerned. They recently chose Superintendent the Rev. Blau as Bishop, a man who is not even a Polish citizen. Naturally the Government cannot recognize this. Unfortunately the legal position of our Church has not yet been regulated."

I asked further about the native Evangelical Poles, a great many of whom live on the German frontier in the districts of Kempen, Adelnau and Schildberg.

"Unfortunately they are members of the United Evangelical Church. The pastors are German and their influence is extremely bad. They try to persuade their parishioners that, being Evangelical, they are German, although their language is Polish."

"How can this be amended?"

"The only thing to be done is to pursue a forthright Polish policy. It must not be allowed that German schools be founded in these districts. Everything must be managed with great tact, in order to arouse the racial consciousness of these Protestants."

"How many Evangelical Poles are there in Posen?"

"About five hundred. 114 men took part in the voting yesterday. Pastor Manitius, who is at present vicar in Zdunska Wola in the district of Kalisch, was unanimously chosen. He is a Pole and comes of a clerical family. His grandfather was a worthy patriot, a learned man and a forerunner of mine as head of the Lutheran Church in Warsaw. The new vicar will remove to Posen in August or September at latest. There will then be a solemn inauguration, and I shall come from Warsaw to attend this. Our parish, the first Polish parish in Posen, will then be definitely consolidated. We have no church of our own. One cannot even dream of acquiring any of the empty churches belonging to the Evangelical Germans. They would rather sell them to the Catholics than to us, for we, although Evangelical like themselves, are Poles. We shall therefore continue to rent the church belonging to the Old Lutheran sect in the Garten Strasse; at any rate for the present."

We shall return presently to the founding of the Polish-Evangelical congregation in Posen, dependent upon Warsaw. For the moment we will deal with the general reproaches which Bursche thinks it necessary to heap upon the United Church and with which he saves the Polish Government the trouble of justifying its rigorous behaviour towards the United Church.

The most important reproach is that of disloyalty to the Polish State. The United Church is filled with the old Prussian spirit, its pastors have their eyes fixed on Berlin, they take up an antagonistic standpoint against Poland, they hate the Poles. We are used to such reproaches from the Polish press or in proclamations of the West Marken Society. But it is painful to hear them from a man whose high position and Evangelical confession should render him more just and more cautious in the judgments pronounced upon his fellow-believers. Is Bursche not aware that all reproaches of disloyal behaviour which have been raised against pastors of the United Church have at once proved to be without foundation as soon as they

were categorically made? Many pastors have been arrested, sometimes under serious accusations, hundreds of parsonages were searched. Must there not have been at least isolated cases in which enough material was found to justify an action?

It is true to be sure, that the pastors of the United Church are without exception, deeply rooted in Germanism. But surely it is precisely Bursche, the ardent Polish patriot, who should be able to understand that the hearts of these pastors are sore over the misfortunes that have overtaken their country, and that they need time to accustom themselves to the new conditions? Did former conditions in Czaristic Russia not suffice to show him how the Germans, clinging obstinately to their Germanism, contrived to combine this with the greatest loyalty to the State which afforded them shelter? It is not everyone who can forget so lightly as Bursche what his blood, his name and his family history utter unto him.

The reproach that the United Church had received the foundation of Polish-Evangelical religious services with unconcealed displeasure, is equally ill-founded. The United Church is not a purely German church, as Bursche contends, but includes a great number of Polish-speaking parishes in South Posen and in the Soldau angle, and it has always allowed its language minorities the right to religious services in their own language. In parishes where Evangelical Poles lived, only such pastors were chosen, as a matter of principle, as could deliver a sermon in Polish. Was Bursche really unaware that in 1921, services in Polish were arranged for the Evangelical Poles who had congregated in Posen and that it was the Polish congregation itself, then in process of formation which demanded through the mouth of its chairman that the Germans should not have the right to hold Polish religious services, because these were alleged to serve only Germanizing purposes? These religious services, which at first were well attended, must at last be given up, because the Polish daily papers had been persuaded not to print notice of the services.

If it be indeed a fact that it is scarcely possible at present to find sufficient pastors with a knowledge of Polish, the fault does not lie with the United Church and its leaders. The blame rests with the Polish State, the policy of which has driven to emigration many a pastor who was linked by many intimate bonds to his Polish congregation, or has even expelled them, as in the case of Pastor Heldt of Narzým.

But it is not worth while to discuss every detail of this article full of misrepresentations, falsehoods and spite, an article which, moreover, has not been corrected in any point by Bursche, although he has received replies to all the points brought forward. The tendency followed by the article is clear as day. The open invitation to the State to embark upon a decisive campaign of Polonisation is connected with reproaches against the United Church. The invitation to the Government to object to the choice of the Rev. Blau as Bishop and to suffer no German schools in southern Posen, show plainly enough the tendency of this Polish policy. And as for the remarks about the numerous empty and unnecessary Evangelical churches, is that not perhaps intended as a modest invitation to the Polish State to use a little violence to help its loyal Polish-Evangelical parishes to get their churches, and when they have enough, to distribute a few to another church, which also has long since cast a greedy eye upon Evangelical churches? Not only the history of past centuries, but also the transformation of numerous Greek-Catholic churches of Eastern Poland into Roman-Catholic churches provides a precedent.

But Bursche goes still further. He sows dissension in the territory of the United Evangelical Church by seeking to enlarge his church beyond the boundaries of Congress Poland. The darling project of this Bursche whom the irony of fate has appointed to be the chief shepherd of a German church, namely the foundation of a great Polish-Evangelical church, was ruined when the plebiscite in East Prussia ended with such lamentable results for Poland. But it is not only the Teschen territory, the former Prussian territory which was ceded, that afforded a possibility of expansion for the Lutheran Church,

— a possibility which the Nader Plan of a Statute regulating the relations of state and church is well known to have taken into consideration, in that it limited the territory of the other Evangelical churches to that which they already owned, — but all Poland was designated as the territory of the Lutheran Church.

This expansion can take place in two ways. The first method, which gives the best promise of success, is the drawing together of the parishes with mixed languages, already mentioned, in Southern Poland with the adjacent slice of Middle Silesia, now become part of Poland and the South-west corner of East Prussia, in the Soldau territory, now assigned to Poland. To be sure, it has to be made plain that the Masurians and Poles inhabiting these regions are extremely Germanized, not on account of measures of oppression practised by the Prussian State, but on account of their having so long been a part of the Prussian State, in which they were perfectly comfortable. It is precisely Bursche who should be well able to comprehend this feeling, for he bases his own right to deny his German nationality, and to feel himself a true Pole upon the fact that his family had lived for many years in Poland. When the tables are turned, and it is a case of Poles who, in some instances, have belonged to Prussia for hundreds of years, and have gradually acquired German ways and speech, shall these have no right to maintain them? No, they must be won back to Poland. This object is above all to be attained by means of a complete Polonization of the schools. On this account an Evangelical Teachers' College has been founded in Soldau, and an undenominational College in Schildberg, and a pair of tried and trusted Evangelical pastors who follow devotedly in Bursche's footsteps, Pastor Lodwich and Pastor Banschel, have been installed at the head of these institutes. Here the future exponents of re-Polonisation in these regions are to be trained. Meanwhile, numerous Evangelical teachers from other Polish territories, particularly from Teschen and Galicia have been sent there.

But Bursche has other ways of prosecuting his plan of driving a wedge into the territory of the United Church. In the course of the last few years a relatively large number of Polish officials professing the Evangelical creed moved into the formerly Prussian territory. This immigration was not a mere coincidence. In 1921, the *Lodzer Freie Presse* published an Order of the Commando of the 2. Army, in which the words occur:

"For the purpose of increasing the Polish-Evangelical element in Pommerellia, the Ministry of War thinks it desirable to transfer a certain number of Polish-Evangelical railway, state and finance officials to this region.

For this purpose I stipulate:

(a) That all formations under my command should submit lists of Polish-Evangelical military persons remaining in active service who from ideal motives request their dismissal from the Polish army in order to enter the Civil Service in Pommerellia.

(b) Only persons of whose thoroughly Polish character there can be no doubt should be included in the aforesaid lists.

(c) The lists must divided into the following categories:

(1) Number of entry. (2) Christian Name, Surname. (3) Rank.

(4) Division and function. (5) State what position is required."

It is obvious that Bursche is behind this Order of the Ministry of War. It is further unlikely that he has only succeeded in interesting the Ministry of War for his project of artificially creating Polish-Evangelical minorities and thereby advance posts of the Warsaw Consistory in the territory of the United Evangelical Church. In many places, particularly in Posen, but also in Thorn, Graudenz and Bromberg, a not inconsiderable number of Poles have collected. The United Evangelical Church, which never made its membership contingent upon nationality, at first regarded these newly-arrived Poles as members of its congregation. Polish services were arranged for them, and many concessions were made to their wishes in spiritual and educational matters. Bursche himself concedes that no difficulties of creed were in the way. But the projects of Bursche were in the way, for he had organized this immigration of Evangelical Poles for the purpose of founding parishes in Posen territory which should be his own, connected with the Warsaw

Consistory. His plans would have been foiled if even a fraction of the immigrants had joined the congregations of the United Church. The Polish religious services which had been arranged in Posen were therefore systematically sabotaged. On the other hand, in such towns as Graudenz, where the number of Evangelical Poles was not large enough to justify the formation of a community, extensive demands were made for separate clerical service, representation in the Parish Church Council, Polish religious services at the same time as the principal church services, separate Polish preparation for confirmation. When these demands are not fulfilled — and in parishes which are 95 percent German, it is impossible, with the best will in the world, to fulfil them, — there are loud complaints about the anti-Polish attitude of the Church.

The first Polish-Evangelical parish professing the Lutheran creed came into being in Posen. According to Bursche's statement it numbers 500 souls, in reality there are fewer, about 40 families. The first pastor of this congregation, Manitius, who was elected in April 1924, was solemnly inaugurated in office by Bursche on Reformation Day, 1924.¹ The parish does not yet possess a church of its own. Bursche's remarks in the conversation quoted, in which he referred to the refusal of the United Evangelical Church to let a church which was standing empty to the Polish congregation, have not a word of truth in them. There were no Evangelical churches standing empty in Posen, the Lukas Congregation in Jersitz, mentioned by Bursche, has not been dissolved, but exists as before as an independent living. But the parish was willing to rent its church to the Evangelical-Polish parish in order to be accomodating. Since the Polish congregation found the

¹ The *Glos ewangelickie* reports with pride and satisfaction that almost all the high Catholic officials in Posen came to this festival and to the banquet that followed, including the Voivode Count Bninski, whose utterance a year earlier, that there were only as many good Poles as there were good Catholics, had caused much perturbation in Bursche's camp. On the contrary the heads of the United Evangelical Church in Posen had been informed neither of the founding of the parish nor of the introductory festival.

amount suggested as rent, (less than half the sum mentioned by Bursche) too high, it was suggested that they should submit a provisional contract in which the wishes and proposals of the Polish congregation were set forth. Some considerable time after, the news arrived that the Polish congregation had come to a satisfactory agreement with the Old Lutheran congregation.

It may be that in the course of years a number of Polish-Evangelical parishes will come into being in a similar manner in the towns of Posen and Pommerellia.² And Bursche will look with pride upon his work and dream and talk further of the missionary task of this his Church in Catholic Poland. It does not matter that the price paid was a heavy one, that the founding of these Polish parishes with a few thousand souls was the result of a policy which drove one million Evangelical believers out of the country. These believers were "only" Germans.

There have been repeated attempts to effect an understanding with Bursche, proceeding from Posen and West Prussia, and actuated by feverish anxiety for the fate of the Evangelical cause. These efforts have not succeeded. And they can never succeed, as long as Bursche's political considerations outweigh his clerical motives. A man who finds it possible to use expressions such as Bursche employed at the burial of the pro-Polish Pastor Hadrian in Lodz, when he openly praised the dead man for having had nothing to do with the pro-German "rabble", who signs his name to the hate-inspired proclamations of the Westmark Society, who can say to the representative of a Catholic newspaper with respect to his relations with the United Church: "We do not keep up any relations with this Church, on account of its chauvinistic tendencies", — such a man cannot fulfil the vital task of effecting a compromise between all Evangelical sects in Poland for which his official position would appear peculiarly to have fitted him.

² The inauguration of Pastor Schlaffke as spiritual shepherd of the Polish-Evangelical congregation in Bromberg took place in this town on April, 5 1923.

One can only cherish a hope that power of facts will embue this man, today the tried and trusty confederate of the Polish State in its battle against the United Evangelical Church, with a proper sense of his duty and his place as an Evangelical leader.

I am nearing my conclusion. I have endeavoured to present the situation of the United Evangelical Church in Poland in its relations to the Polish State as quietly and as dispassionately as is possible to a man who for more than three years has been torn from the midst of his work in the body of this Church, but whose heart is still bound up in its fate. When I began this task, I felt all the better able to undertake a dispassionate account of the facts, since there were many signs which pointed to betterment and indicated that a way to peaceful relations between Church and State would soon be found. Nothing was further from my intention, than that my book should prove a disturbing factor in the apparently peaceable development of the situation.

In the meantime the position has entirely altered.

Since the ratification of the Concordate with Rome by the Seim on March 27, 1925, *the ruling position of the Catholic Church in the Polish State has become more firmly founded than ever.* The Left Party in the Seim, including the religious minorities, has lifted its voice in vain against the Concordate, especially Article 1. In this, the Catholic Church is guaranteed the free use of its spiritual might and its clerical law in accordance with heavenly provisions and the Canonical Law. Not even the reservation that the canonical law shall only be valid inasmuch as it shall not conflict with the laws of the State, has been made. This signifies, however, that the State has unconditionally capitulated to the Church, above all in the marriage laws. The outrageous practices of the Catholic Church in the matter of mixed marriages hereby receive State recognition.

Stanislaus Grabski, the man responsible for concluding this concordate has, however, been recently appointed Polish Minister of Education.

The policy of de-Germanization is also celebrating new triumphs. The 27 000 men and women who optioned for Germany have already received notice from the Polish officials to leave Poland within the time-limit set in the Kaeckenbeek arbitration-decision. Every number of the *Monitor Polski* contains long lists of newly-opened proceedings of liquidation of German property. Great mass-meetings are being held, in connection with political conditions in all the towns and villages of Posen and Pommerellia, and hatred of the Germans is encouraged and fomented.

The answer returned by the Ministry of Instruction on January 11, 1925 to the practical propositions (mentioned above) made by the German deputies for the elimination of the existing grievances, shows how little it can be expected that the State would show any wavering in the matter of German-Evangelical schools. This answer was as follows:

"The school officials in the territory of the Curatoria of the school district of Posen and Pommerellia not only show the greatest good-nature in applying the laws and regulations as far as they concern the children of German nationality, but also grant very far-reaching modifications as far as possible, going far beyond the obligations set forth in the Agreement." The Minister therefore considers it to be a perfectly proper condition of things, even sees in it a proof of special good-nature, that 48,5 percent of the German school-children in Pommerellia and in the whole of Posen and West Prussia 17 000 out of a total of 50 000 children, should go to Polish schools, and thus utterly refuses to contemplate any alteration of these conditions.

Is it surprising that a critical moment has again arrived in the relations of the United Evangelical Church to the Polish State? The Polish State thinks less than ever of retiring a single step in its demands upon the Church: It demands entire separation from the Mother Church and that the State should have considerable influence even upon the internal affairs of the Church. And the latest expulsions of Evangelical clergymen and above all the liquidation of the Paulinum, which

also shows that the Polish officials have in the meantime learned to throw restraint to the winds and disregard the warning voices from abroad, indicate that the State will not shrink from the most oppressive measures as a means of enforcing its demands.

It is easy to understand the weariness that overcomes many who have been holding bravely to their posts of duty. Nothing avails any more, the iron heel of historical-political development strides crushingly over all attempts to preserve German-Evangelical life in Posen and Pommerellia! Such voices are given strength by the absolute isolation suffered by the mentally alert sections of Evangelical German life, above all the parsonages. One is cut off from the spiritual life of the old homeland and the Mother Church. Only too easily the sentiment: We are forgotten, nobody knows of our need, nobody suffers with us and prays for us in our need, — finds roots in oppressed hearts.

It is the purpose of this pamphlet to send out a call to those in the lost territory — to say: We do know what you have to suffer. And wherever previously nothing was known — this booklet shall do its modest part to open the eyes and awaken love in the hearts of others for those who "are persecuted for the sake of truth".

I cannot conclude without expressing my conviction that in spite of all its troubles and persecutions, *the United Evangelical Church in Poland has a future*. This conviction is not based upon any human aid, but upon the living God, whose Word this Church proclaims and whose work it is doing. He will send help, so that the words of the Psalmist, which of late years have become almost a password for the Church, may in verity come to pass:

*"I shall not die, but live
And declare the works of the Lord."*

Appendix I

(compare page 22).

Further Facts and Illustrations.

The demands of the German delegates, mentioned on page 22 are more particularly given here:

(a) The development of the underlying principles of the Paris Minority Protection Treaty of June 28, 1919, in its application to the Church, its parishes and members according to the measure of their needs:

According to this, in particular:

(b) The use of the German language in the church services, in church work, in church instruction and the procedure of church guilds and societies, as well as in the administration of the church.

(c) Protection for the proper maintenance of church Holy-Days.

(d) The maintenance of purely spiritual relations to the Mother Church for the purposes of common action in matters of creed, teaching, church usages, and charities, including the right to send representatives of the United Evangelical Church from Poland to the General Synod, to receive gifts from abroad, especially from the Mother Church, and to exchange religious literature with the Mother Church.

(e) The retention of the clergymen and church officials at present installed in office, even if they should not be Polish citizens

(f) The possibility of training theological students in German educational institutions and permission to call church workers from abroad, particularly from the Mother Church without any change of nationality, and with full recognition of qualifications acquired outside Poland—all this, however, only in so far as no possibility should exist of drawing the required church workers from Poland itself or of educating in Poland persons who could fulfil all the confessional, scholarly and linguistic requirements which might justifiably be demanded.

(g) The Parishes, their clergy and church officials, pensioned persons and persons drawing allowances must continue to be cared for by the former clerical institutions for social relief (sick relief and similar organisations) so long as no sufficient substitute for these can be provided.

(h) The church societies, institutions and foundations, especially those for home and foreign missions or Christian charities, are to continue their work undisturbed."

Appendix II

(compare page 22).

Proposals for the formulation of a law regarding the relation of the United Church in Poland to the State.

(1) The United Evangelical Church is a religious community in the sense of Articles 113 and 115 of the Polish State Constitution of March 17, 1921, and is recognized as such by the State.

(2) The United Evangelical Church, inclusive of its parishes and organizations, has the right to regulate its internal affairs independently, to buy and to own moveable and immoveable property, to manage the same and to dispose of it, and remains in full enjoyment of its foundations and funds, as also of its institutions for religious, educational and charitable purposes. (Art. 113 of the Constitution.)

The undisturbed continuance of the work of the Protestant clubs, institutions and foundations, is to be guaranteed, especially those connected with home and foreign missions or church charities. The Protestant clubs, institutions and foundations are to continue to enjoy the full right to possess and to acquire moveable and immoveable property, to manage and to dispose of the same.

(3) The United Evangelical Church is to govern itself according to its own laws. The State recognition of Church laws demanded by Article 115 of the Constitution of the State must be applied for to the highest state authority in confessional matters. Should no objection be raised within two months, reckoned from the day of presenting the application, it may be assumed that this has been granted. The recognition may be refused only when the clerical law is in contradiction to a provision of the State law, which must be expressly cited.

(4) The resolutions of the parishes as to the raising of church taxes must have the approval of the Voivode concerned, whenever the aid of the State is invoked for the collection of taxes.

(5) The Polish State grants the United Evangelical Church a current annual payment, payable every six months in advance. The amount is to be calculated in accordance with Article 9, Sec. 2 of the Agreement of June 28, 1919. The determining factor is the relation of the total number of members of the United Evangelical Church living in the formerly Prussian territory to the total number of the population in the same region.

The payments legally due to be rendered by the State are to remain unaffected.

The Consistory in Posen must within a period of six months after the close of the fiscal year render to the supreme State officials for Church Matters an account of the uses to which the state moneys have been put.

(6) The United Evangelical Church, its Synodal Organisations and parishes, institutes and establishments, clergy and officials are, in view of their income and their property, exempt from all taxes, public levies and burdens in a similar manner to the most-favoured recognized religious community, according to Articles 113—115 of the State Constitution.

(7) Only persons who possess Polish citizenship may on principle be appointed as vicars or church officials of the United Evangelical Church.

The clergy and church officials officiating at the time when this law comes into force are to remain in office without being obliged to acquire Polish nationality or any further qualification.

It will be permissible in the future to draw in clergy and lay helpers from the territory of other Protestant churches in agreement with the supreme State officials for Confessional Matters. This consent will not be refused as long as there shall be no possibility of drawing from Poland itself the necessary persons capable of satisfying the confessional, scholarly and linguistic demands of the Church.

(8) The summoning of the clergy and church officials is to be regulated entirely according to the laws of the United Evangelical Church.

The Consistory is bound to inform the Voivode concerned of every permanent appointment of a clergyman or a higher church official.

(9) The clergy and church officials of the United Evangelical Church are to enjoy the same advantages which the State grants to the clergy and church officials of the other recognized religious societies, in respect to their position before the law (inclusive of the degree of rank) and with respect to protection in the exercise of their offices.

(10) The future clergy of the United Evangelical Church are required to spend at least two terms in the course of their studies at an Evangelical Faculty within the boundaries of the Polish State or at a Theological School which is to be established by the United Evangelical Church. This obligation is to remain suspended as long as no faculty or theological school exists which is recognized by the Supreme Synod of the United Evangelical Church in Poland as answering to its confessional, scholarly and linguistic standards.

In case the erection of a Theological School takes place, the Supreme State officials for Confessional Matters are to be informed as to the constitution of the teaching staff. A synopsis of the lectures planned is also to be laid before the Supreme Official for Confessional Matters at the beginning of each term.

(11) On the occasion of their entering upon the office of vicar, the clergy will be pledged to obedience to the Constitution of the State.

On their installation, the members of the church administration are to take an oath upon the Constitution of the State. This oath is to be taken before the Superintendent-General or his representative, and a member of the Consistory and an actuary shall also be present.

(12) The election of the highest clerical officer of the United Evangelical Church must subsequently be confirmed by the State.

(13) The United Evangelical Church, its parishes and communities, are to be guaranteed the free use of their own tongue in church services, in the care of souls, church instruction and club life, as well as in the management of the church.

(14) The church holidays of the United Evangelical Church which are not simultaneously recognized as national holidays, are to be under the protection of the police. Members of the United Evangelical Church may demand that the State should grant to them, with respect to their church holidays, the same consideration which is paid to the members of other recognized religious communities with regard to holidays of theirs as recognized by the State. Children belonging to the United Evangelical Church are free of the obligation to attend school on church holidays.

(15) In carrying out the principle of parity, the right is to be guaranteed to the United Evangelical Church to enjoy in its own person and in the persons of its parts, members, clergy, officials, establishments and institutes, all privileges, permissions and prerogatives which a recognized religious community shall be granted in future or has been granted before the coming into force of this law, for itself, its parts, members, clergy, officials, establishments and institutes.

Curtailments of the clerical self-administration are permissible only by means of a State Law, which applies equally to all recognized religious communities.

(16) The United Evangelical Church in Poland is to be free to maintain purely clerical relations with the United Evangelical Church in Germany and Danzig for the purpose of work in common in matters of faith, teaching, religious cult and charity, including the right of participation in the Supreme Synodal Representation of the United Evangelical Church. It shall also have the right to exchange gifts for church purposes with Protestants abroad and to exchange printed matter of a clerical, religious and theological nature.

(17) The parishes of the United Evangelical Church, its clergy and church officials, pensioned persons and dependents, are to remain in the care of their previous clerical relief establishments (Sick Clubs and such institutions) so long as no substitute of equal value has been provided.

(18) All legal regulations which otherwise serve to regulate the rights of the State with regard to the United Evangelical Church, are to be abrogated when this law comes into force.

(19) The provisions of this law are to apply to the United Evangelical Church in Upper Silesia, as soon as it has decided to join the United Evangelical Church in Poland.

(20) This law is to come into force on the day it is proclaimed and in accordance with Art. 115 of the State Constitution it can be altered only after an understanding has been arrived at with the rightful representatives of the United Evangelical Church."

Appendix III

(compare page 51).

The Confirmation Hall as Police Station.

"The Protestant congregation in Kupferhammer (Midzichovo), District of Neutomischl has suffered for four and a half years at the hands of the local police officials in a manner which demands emphatic protest. The church is connected with the vicarage by means of the Confirmation Hall. The Confirmation Hall is on the right of the vicarage entrance, the vicar's office on the left. During the military occupation in January, 1920, both these rooms were temporarily requisitioned for military purposes. When the military left, the man who was at that time the First District Commissioner in Kupferhammer, made preliminary arrangements with the departing commander and without more ado, took possession of the rooms in question, asking no permission of either parson or parish. It was some comfort to think that this disagreeable enforced hospitality could not last long, since there were plenty of other rooms to be had in the town, even a house opposite the vicarage belonging to a German, which had been for sale for some time. It was also thought that a special building would be erected for the Commission. This was a mistake. For four and a half years the vicar has been obliged to hold his confirmation classes of forty or fifty children in his sitting-room, where his best furniture stands, since he has been deprived of his office. The bookcases with the church documents and the vicar's own library must also be stored in this one room. One may easily imagine that fifty children bring quantities of dust and dirt into the room, which settles upon the furniture and the books. In addition to this, the living-room is separated from the office only by a door, and all conversation and speaking in one room is audible in the other. Last winter all the official business of the Commission was transacted in this office, since the Confirmation Hall required too much

heating material. The parishioners who visit the vicar find their way barred to right and left by police offices and can reach their clergyman only by roundabout ways. How long has it been customary to house police offices in a vicarage? There is naturally a good deal of lively traffic in the police offices and it is easy to imagine the unrest and disturbance thus caused in the vicarage. Would any Catholic clergyman put up with such conditions as have now been forced upon this Evangelical vicar for four and a half years without any prospect of improvement?

In the summer of 1922, the District Commissioner in office at the time was summoned in all seriousness to surrender the illegally occupied church rooms by Oct. 1, 1922. A written answer was received, stating that the Commission would not leave the rooms in question until other rooms suitable for housing it had been found. It was then decided to go to law, and suit was begun. On Dec. 7, 1922, the Court at Bentschen gave judgment that the rooms belonging to the church should be vacated immediately. The Commission ignored this legal judgment. In the spring of 1923 the Commission confiscated a two-room dwelling opposite the church. The District Commissioner at that time sympathized with the vicar and the parish on account of the injustice which had been done, and these feelings he expressed on various occasions. He did not stay long in Kupferhammer.

It was expected that the Commission would be removed to the confiscated apartment. This proved an illusion. The vicar, who attempted to ascertain from the succeeding District Commissioner the reason why the confiscated apartment was not taken over by the Commission (a Commissioner is after all obliged to carry out the intentions of his superior officials) received the answer that the Government had refused to pay the cost of transferring the telephone. This would at the time have cost about 100,000 Marks. Soon after, the confiscated apartment was occupied by a newly-married frontier official. The church could only look on and do nothing. Conditions remained unaltered. About three months ago the judgment of the Court was handed in to the officials for execution. After some time the Posen Voivode transmitted his answer to the Vicar of Kupferhammer by way of the District Commissioner. It was to this effect: "As soon as the Vicar has provided suitable rooms for the reception of the Commission, the Commission will be removed." But what rooms suitable for housing a Commission could be found in the villagers' dwellings, especially as one big cupboard after another had recently been smuggled into the Confirmation Class-room? One is compelled to ask: "How long has a provision existed to the effect that a church parish or a vicar illegally deprived of halls or living-rooms should be compelled to provide other rooms before evicting the interlopers?"

At the same time it would have been perfectly possible for the Commission to have found suitable premises in the roomy mansion belonging to the Squire of Kupferhammer, which during the whole four-and-a-half years was occupied for the most part only by a caretaker, since the Squire's family used it only as a summer residence. This could have been used, if the Commission had so desired, and had not shirked the cost of the repairs involved. To the best of our knowledge, the use of the rooms was offered upon such conditions. Not a penny of rent was paid during these four-and-a-half years. The sofa lent by the Vicar was broken. The official during whose period of office this occurred, did not even think it necessary to apologize for the damage. And who is to pay for it? It has not been repaired to this day.

As other persons are also living in the vicarage, only three rooms besides the bedrooms remain for the use of the Vicar and his family, one of them a very small apartment, which he uses as a study. Not only is he compelled to carry out his official and spiritual duties under great difficulties on this account, but his evangelical parishioners feel that their religious life is restricted and repressed. The Confirmation class-room is urgently needed not only for the instruction of candidates for confirmation, but also for religious services at certain times of the year, especially in winter, for Bible-meetings and prayer-meetings, instruction of the newly-confirmed, for Social evenings and other church gatherings. All this activity has been put a stop to, since the Parish has been deprived of the Confirmation Hall. This violates all conceptions of law and justice!

The matter is now to be laid before the Minister and the Sejm."

Appendix IV

(compare page 95).

A subsidiary list of cases of alienation and suppression of Evangelical Charity Institutions.

a) The Johanna Home in Posen.

The Johanna Home is the Old Deaconesses' House. Since the re-building of the House of the Deaconesses, it has been used as a dwelling for solitary persons of both sexes who need a nurse's care. Twenty-one rooms of this house were confiscated for the use of the Citizen Guard in 1919. When the Citizen Guard was dissolved, the rooms were not given

back. On the contrary, the Commander of the Citizen Guard, without consulting the Chairman of the House, and in spite of his protests, handed the rooms over to the Polish Red Cross. The board of directors finally thought it best to make a regular contract of tenancy with the Red Cross which then acknowledged the obligation to surrender the rooms if the House should be in need of them. When this state of things later occurred, and the Red Cross was given notice to leave, the Tenant's Office (*Mietsamt*) decided that the Red Cross had the right to remain in the rooms unless the Committee of the House found other offices in their place. In 1921, the Magistracy of the town of Posen demanded from the Voivode that the House should be temporarily confiscated on the score of the Prussian Expropriation Law of 1874, which gave the State the right to expropriate private property in the public interest. The public interest in this case was represented by the necessity of enlarging the Municipal Hospital, for which the town had no funds. This petition, to be sure, met with no success, but the mere fact that it could seriously be put forward is significant enough.

b) *The Deaconesses' House in Bromberg.*

Recent events, which on January 1, 1925 led to the dismissal of the Evangelical Head Physician, Dr. Staemmler, son of the Rev. Staemmler, D. D. Posen, and to his place being filled by a Polish-Catholic physician, have called attention to the Deaconesses' House in Bromberg, and to the gradual process, which has been going on for years, of turning this institute into a *Polish* one. We will allow a detailed report in the *Deutsche Rundschau* to vouch for the facts, and the case furnishes a perfect example of the consistency and absolute disregard for law and justice with which Polish officials pursue their ends of furthering Catholicism and diminishing Germanism, without any interference from the supervising officials. The report runs as follows:

Several weeks ago, at the beginning of December, 1924, the German contingent in the Seim and the Senate forwarded to the

Minister of the Interior an Interpellation from which we take the following extract:

"In the year 1875, Frau Giese, *née Rasalski* of Bromberg, founded an institution which was to bear the name "Evangelical Deaconesses' Institute, Giese-Rasalski Foundation". The will was extended and confirmed in its details by a codicil in the year 1876 and a Statute of the year 1882, which was prepared by the Magistrate of the town of Bromberg and sanctioned and signed by the Minister of the Interior. The purpose of the said foundation is the founding and upkeep of a hospital which was consecrated in the year 1885 and has since supported itself without needing any bonuses from the town. The Magistrate of the town of Bromberg is, according to the provisions, the official Head of the Institute and chooses a Board which has charge of the internal affairs of the Institute. According to the statutes, the chairman of this board must be an Evangelical town councillor, the members of the board shall be composed of six male and three female Evangelical members. The testament further provides that Evangelical deaconesses shall undertake the nursing. The testament, codicil and statute make it plain that the Institute is intended to bear an Evangelical character. This Evangelical character was preserved up to the year 1923. The Board was Evangelical, and with one exception, only Evangelical sisters and doctors were engaged in the work of the Institute. For several years the section of internal diseases was conducted by a Jewish physician, who was the only specialist for internal diseases resident in Bromberg. In the face of the circumstances prevailing before the taking-over of our part of the territory, the conception "Evangelical" might always be taken to mean "German-Evangelical". The donor and the capital belonging to the foundation came from a German family. Thus the Institute was undoubtedly founded as an Evangelical-German Institution.

In 1919 the Magistrate of the town of Bromberg began to undermine the character of the Institute as determined by the testatrix, by appointing Polish members of the Board. In the year 1923—24, Evangelical-German members began to be superseded by Catholic-Polish members. At present the Board of Administration consists of 3 Evangelical Germans, 3 Evangelical Poles and 3 Catholic Polish members, one of them actually in holy orders. Thereby the Chairman himself is a Catholic Polish town councillor, by the name of Kaszubowski. This combination of the members is not only in contradiction to the spirit of the will, it also conflicts with the provisions of the Statute which was sanctioned by the superior officials.

Furthermore, Dr. Staemmler, Head Physician of the surgical section of the Institute, was given notice to leave on

December 31, 1924. Dr. Staemmler is a Polish national, received recognition of his degree by passing a nostrification in Posen and has held his post since 1922. The Society of Physicians (*Zwiazek Lekarzy*) of Bromberg has confirmed his capabilities as a surgical specialist and specialist for surgical diseases of women. Dr. Staemmler received notice to leave without any reasons being given. Dr. Marynski was chosen by the Magistracy to fill his place. The choice of a *Catholic-Polish* physician for this *Evangelical* and logically *German* institute again renders its future character questionable. Since the Surgeon must devote all his working hours to the Institute and is in the Hospital for the greater part of the day, it naturally follows that he must be in close touch with nursing sisters, the Evangelical German deaconesses. If a Catholic Polish physician replace him, this mutual co-operation will very soon cease, and the Magistracy will soon find ways and means to force the sisters out of the Institute, as has already happened in the District Hospital at Bleichfelde, at Znin and in other places.

Thus the German element is about to lose a hospital which was always of great importance to Bromberg, the Netze Valley and Pommerellia, and which always bore a good name."

The German contingent in the Seim and Senate added to this report of facts an urgent appeal to the Minister of the Interior to revoke through administrative methods the unstatutory decree of the Bromberg Magistracy. As far back as September, 1924, Town Councillors Pommerenke and Simmich, acting on behalf of the German Fraction in the Bromberg Municipal Parliament and of the Evangelical Congregation, had an audience with the Voivode of Posen and pleaded that the superior officials might at once intervene. They received no binding answer, but were assured of receiving information within 14 days. As this information did not arrive, they again sent a written query to the Voivode's office. An answer was returned that an investigation was proceeding. As no information as to the result of the investigation was received, the Town Councillors of the German contingent handed the matter over to the German Contingent in the Seim, who made the above Interpellation to the Ministry of the Interior in Warsaw.

At the end of December, two German members of the Seim, Canon Klinke and Lieutenant Colonel (retired) Graebe, once more paid a personal visit to the office

of the Voivode and were so far successful that on the last day of the old year, Voivode Councillor Orlovski, the responsible head of this department, came to Bromberg to clear up the case. Herr Orlovski did not visit the Deaconesses' Institute, neither did he get into touch with the Head Sister nor even with Dr. Staemmler. When Dr. Pommerenke visited him in the Poor Office, the Voivode Councillor informed him that his time was very limited and that nothing different could be decided in the matter, as Dr. Staemmler had no written contract. It must be remarked that Dr. Staemmler was installed on July 4, 1922 by a written document from the Magistracy as leading physician of the surgical department of the Deaconesses' Institute. Needless to say, this instalment, legally speaking, is precisely the same as a contract. In addition to this, Dr. Staemmler asked as early as December 2, 1922, for a contract in writing, and when, as an absolute surprise a new advertisement of both physicians' positions as vacant appeared in the September number (1923) of the physicians' magazine, the *Novine Lekarski*, Dr. Staemmler was informed that this advertisement, of which, by the way, the German members of the Board had not been informed, had only been issued in order to settle the conditions of his contract. Both physicians then applied afresh for the "vacancy" but never received an answer. On June 23, 1924, came the notice of dismissal from the Magistracy. Even the Polish Catholic members of the Board had with one voice supported the definite appointment of Dr. Staemmler, and to Dr. Marynski's honour be it said that he, knowing the provisions of the testament, hesitated for months before he acceded to the wishes of the Magistracy and consented to accept the office in place of the German Evangelical physician who had been thrown out.

Out of the newspaper polemics which followed upon this report, we select an utterance of the *Gazeta Bydgoska* as typical of the Polish point of view in such matters. The fact that a few Evangelical Germans were still allowed to give their services to a German Evangelical hospital beside the Catholic Poles who had been put in contrary to all statutes, is

considered as a magnanimous "concession" made by the Polish Magistrate to the Institute and its charter, "although he might in the last five years have exercised greater pressure towards banning the distinctively German character from this institute."

c) *The Orphanage in Rudno.*

The Starost in Meve forbade the Parish Church Council to take possession of the Rudno Orphanage belonging to the Evangelical parish, and claimed it for *Polish-Catholic* purposes, with the excuse that the Polish population had also contributed to a collection which was made for the home. On Aug. 9, 1921, a Commission appeared which undertook an exact inventory and confiscation of the furniture and fittings.

d) *Further Cases.*

On April 9, the German Hospital "Bethesda" in Gnesen was forcibly taken possession of by the Poles. The hospital was originally founded by the Patriotic Women's League. The League changed its name in October 1919 to "German Women's Society for Gnesen and Neighbourhood" and formed an independent society, the chairman and members of which were Polish citizens and which received no auxiliary monies or other support for its work from anyone. On January 10, 1920, the Society was entered in the Register of Landed Property as owner of the Hospital. In 1920 the Polish officials put in a forced administration which was again removed in 1921. In spite of this the Hospital was declared subject to liquidation on September 5, 1924. Although on February 28, 1925, the German-Polish Court of Arbitration forbade any alteration of the status quo, the Committee of Liquidation sold the house to the town of Gnesen for 47,000 Zloty. (The real value is about 600,000 Zloty.) On Holy Thursday a Commission, headed by the Mayor and accompanied by police, took forcible possession of the house, the door was broken open, the 25 German-Evangelical sisters from the Mother House at Vandsburg were deprived of their rights and duties and replaced by Polish Red-Cross sisters. The well-known Head Physician, Dr.

Anders was also replaced by a Polish doctor. On April 25, the German sisters were forcibly removed from the house.

In 1913 a German Hospital Society built a house with 20 beds in Bojanovo, in which Posen Evangelical Deaconesses were at work. The house was for the benefit of both German and Polish sick. It was possible with great sacrifices to keep the place going during the inflation period. In November 1924, 524 Poles, making use of a flaw in the constitution, reported themselves to the Chairman as members of the Society. The Chairman refused to admit them, but the Courts acknowledged the claim. Without waiting even until the verdict came into force, the Polish members held a general meeting under the leadership of the Starost on April 15, deposed the former Chairman and decided to take possession of the hospital at once. Two hours later a Commission, led by the Starost and the Mayor, appeared and explained to the sisters that *the Hospital now belonged to the Polish Hospital Society!* At the same time the sisters were given notice — to expire on June 1, — but were already driven out by April 22. Two Catholic nuns with a cook and a man-servant are now living in the house. There are no longer any sick, although in the days of the German-Evangelical hospital patients of all confessions were taken in and treated.

In Strelow the *Children's Home* belonging to the "German Women's Society" was *liquidated* and brought 4400 Zloty, although its real value is 25,000 Zloty. The Evangelical Parish-nurse, who lived here, was forcibly removed by the bailiff, as well as two elderly widows who had found refuge here. The Evangelical Parish, which had rented two rooms in the house for use as confirmation classrooms, was obliged to vacate these

The Hospital and Infirmary belonging to the German Women's Society of Osche in the district of Schwetz was taken possession of by the Liquidations Office of Posen for the District Sick Relief Fund in Schwetz. The day before, the Head of the Society had received a telegram informing her of what was in prospect, and eight days before the Sick Relief Fund in Schwetz had reported the buying of the pro-

perty. The price paid for the property is supposed to be 6600 Zloty, whereas the house cost 26,000 gold marks to build, twenty years ago.

As the process of liquidation is in progress with regard to a number of pieces of property formerly belonging to Patriotic Women's Societies, we may reckon with many repetitions of these cases in the immediate future.

The state institutions for the blind and the deaf and dumb have, of course, become utterly Polish, and have not even preserved small German sections. Children who are placed in these institutes receive a purely Polish education and become entirely estranged from their families.

The difficult economic situation of the institutions in the inflation years must also be considered in this connection. On account of this the activity of those institutions still remaining to the Evangelical church had to be restricted to the utmost degree and smaller institutions must perforce be dissolved or amalgamated with others. The great Jost-Strecker Institutes in Pleschen were obliged to sell several houses.

It is only when we take all these factors into consideration that we realize that the interference of the Polish officials amounts to a *threatening danger* for the *entire Evangelical charity-work* and we realize that the Evangelical church is justified in being peculiarly sensitive upon this point and in resisting with all its energy all interference on the part of officials.

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OCT 21 1967

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